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2016

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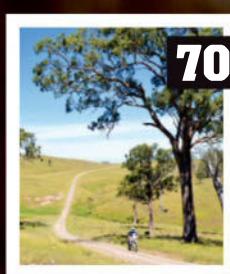
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Clubby has ridden more than most mortal men could conceive of. He's covered so much of Australia, let alone the rest of the planet, on two wheels and yet you'll still catch a huge smile on his dial when the time comes to saddle up again. Ride on, brother — ride on!

BIKE OF THE MONTH





WHEEL

It's a perfect model for new riders, someone getting back into riding, commuters with a little trail thrown in, or someone looking for a bike that doesn't breathe flames



SUZUKI DR-Z250

Suzuki's DR-Z250 is one of those bikes that just keep going with little to no attention from the factory whatsoever. Why mess with a good thing, right? Suzuki has a habit of coming up with solid designs and making them last for, well, decades in fact, and the DR650 is a perfect example of that. The DR-Z250 is an air-cooled 249cc trail bike in the most pure sense of the term. Cleverly, there's an oil cooler included but the smart additions don't stop there. There's an auto-decomp and electric start, as well as a six-speed gearbox that makes freeway

speeds possible. The bike is built to last and it has proven it can do just that, but in these days of big numbers and horsepower ratings ruling the decision process, a bike like the DR-Z is often overlooked.

Seen as a relic of a bygone era, the DR-Z is thought of as lumbering and slow but that's a very narrow-minded view. The bike isn't built to win enduros — there are other bikes for that including Suzuki's own RMX450; it's a perfect model for new riders, someone getting back into riding, commuters with a little trail thrown in, or someone looking for a

bike that doesn't breathe flames but can still hold its own on the trails. And the DR-Z does handle the bush well. The suspension is adjustable but it will be the first point where you'll find its limitations. The engine will keep you humming along at a solid pace, though, much like we used to love about the XR250.

The low seat height, good fuel mileage and a 12-month unlimited kilometre warranty are several more drawcards for the DR-Z, which will serve any rider year after year with little need for intense maintenance.

ON WHEEL



As a commuter it's a brilliant bike that will serve for thousands and thousands of kilometres with little attention

KAWASAKI KLX250S

Kawi's KLX250 is, just like the DR-Z250, a familiar bike to Aussies. While the two bikes target a similar rider, there are a few big differences: the green machine runs a liquid-cooled engine, a speedo designed this century, but a fuel tank that holds a couple of litres less.

The six-speed gearbox and electric start (auto decomp included) give the KLX commuter cred, which is reinforced by a low seat height of 890mm.

Both bikes are a similar weight at around 132kg which, when measured against the newest models, is a heavy bike but on the trails it doesn't feel too bad at all.

The KLX is designed more for the commuter and light trail rider than the DR-Z, which has a slight edge in tougher bush conditions — except in corners, where the KLX is a nice bike that can be ridden aggressively. But as a commuter it's a brilliant

bike that will serve for thousands and thousands of kilometres with little attention required. That is the real beauty of these 250 trail bikes — the ability to get you there but not demand much from the tools for year after year.

The KLX had a makeover not too long ago and it gave the bike a look that sits well in line with the rest of Kawasaki's offroad range, so it doesn't look out of place next to a KXF motocross machine.

SHERCO 450SEF-R

PHOTO MATT BERNARD

Shane Booth takes on a log on a bike he was nothing but impressed by. Sherco's 450SEF-R is one of the standout enduro bikes of 2016. Matt Phillips could well bring home another world title on the Sherco and trailriders everywhere will love its mix of usable power and superb handling.





We're doubtful there's much that will stop the 701 in its tracks where power is the solution

HUSQVARNA 701 ENDURO

Big-bore adventure weapon with 67hp? Yes please!



Husqvarna broke the internet a little when it released details of the 701 Enduro and its sister bike, the Supermoto. Not only are both bikes deadset sexy, but who doesn't love reading 690cc and 67hp in a spec sheet?

The 701 Enduro is described by Husky as a dual-purpose bike and that sets the imagination working in overdrive because currently that space in the marketplace has been occupied forever by Suzuki's DR650 and Kawasaki's KLR650, with KTM's 690 Enduro R a more recent arrival as well as the Yamaha 660 Ténéré.

The 701 Enduro is the sort of

bike that will absolutely nail a daily commute (your licence might get a bit nervous) and then take on any weekend exploration. The 14-litre tank — one litre more than the 690 Enduro R — should give the most perfect service, but at the time of writing a larger adventure tank was in the works.

We're pretty keen to throw a leg over the 701 and even keener to point it at the hills and disappear for a few days. We're doubtful there's much that will stop the 701 in its tracks where power is the solution. We're also interested to see some of the clever builds Aussie riders will put together.

701 ENDURO HIGHLIGHTS

- Ergonomically designed, innovative bodywork.
- 67hp single-cylinder engine featuring latest technologies in design and electronics.
- Chromium-molybdenum trellis frame optimised for precise handling and total rider confidence.
- Competition-level WP 4CS fork and WP rear shock for outstanding control and adjustability.
- Extremely low-weight aluminium swingarm designed to ensure the highest levels of traction and stability.
- Polyamide self-supporting rear subframe with integrated 13-litre fuel tank.
- Keihin 46mm electronic fuel injection with ride-by-wire throttle actuation for impeccable response.
- Switchable engine maps to perfectly adapt engine characteristics according to conditions.
- Cutting-edge switchable ABS with specific off-road mode.
- APTC slipper clutch for maximum control under hard braking.
- Extensive range of accessories to further enhance the bike's characteristics and performance.
- Specific (optional) engine map that limits power, making the 701 ENDURO A2-legal (EU).



Novik Glove

Let your phalanges
feel the love

Gloves... you don't think about them until you get a pair that just doesn't fit right and then it's all you can think about. A quality set of gloves can make a ride, particularly a long or multi-day ride, a more comfortable affair. Far too often, OEM gloves feel like an afterthought with poor fit, feel and durability.

Novik is an American glove manufacturer that has been in business since 2009. They make other things as well but the Novik name is synonymous with gloves.

We've been running a few sets of Noviks for months now and we've gotta say, there's little hope we're giving them up. On adventure rides we run the Cold War gloves and they are one of the most impressive pieces of kit we've ever tried. We gave you a rundown in detail on them last issue, but another set of Noviks we've been running on straight trailrides is the SV3. We've run the SV3 a lot in the bush and these are up with the best glove we've ever worn on a bike. They're super comfortable and boast a heap of feel and grip. The build is top-notch, with the Lycra knuckle section ensuring there's no restriction to movement and neat silicone tabs on the finger

tips to keep a good grip on the levers. They don't bunch up and they don't feel tight. They fit... well, like a glove — a bloody good one at that.

The Cold War and SV3 are two gloves we recommend trying, but all the Noviks are good and they offer many different textures, so find the pair that suits you best.

SV3 FEATURES:

- Sonic-welded TPR logos and upper hand and roost protection.
- Single-layer "Bomb-Palm" palm and thumb reinforcement panel.
- Improved hook and loop wrist enclosure with pull tab.
- Pre-curved Lycra sidewalls on fingers provide superior fit and comfort.
- Lycra knuckle reliefs provide optimum flexibility.
- Silicone fingertips for increased lever control.
- Light-weight and breathable.
- Span used in finger and upper hand areas.
- Q-Span used in thumb area to increase breathability and reduce break-in time.

We've been running a few sets of Noviks for months now and we've gotta say, there's little hope we're giving them up



The Bourke boy took three holeshots and three moto wins from three starts

SIMMONDS WINS AT THE WELL

Tye triumphs for the second year running
PHOTO — BRAD GREENFIELD

KTM Off-Road Racing Team rider Tye Simmonds has started his Alice Springs racing year with a win at the infamous Deep Well motocross event. Deep Well is known to be brutal on riders, with three motos of 35-40 minutes in heat of up to 50 degrees plaguing previous years.

Thankfully for all concerned, the 2016 Deep Well wasn't so bad and featured temps around the high 30s. But nothing slowed down Tye and his 500 EXC, with the Bourke boy taking three holeshots and three moto wins from three starts. Damon Stokie and Jack Dooley-McDonnell came in second and third.

"The big 500 — she was on fire all day today," Simmonds said. "I felt pretty good. My fitness is coming along; we did three 30-minute motos for the day. The Honda boys kept me really honest in the first one but in the second one I got a little bit of breathing room, then in the third I got another holeshot, put down two really hard laps and got a fairly decent lead and got through with the win fairly easily."

Simmonds then immediately went into testing for this year's Finke Desert race in an effort to improve on his second place in 2015. With Tye in form, his team mate Toby Price on fire and the Yamaha boys totally focused, this year's Finke should be an epic.



BIKE SALES STAY STEADY

Yamaha and Honda duke it out

Bike sales didn't do a hell of a lot through 2015, which is better than a slide but not as great as some manufacturers had hoped.

Overall sales put Honda at the top of the pile with Yamaha coming in a narrow second. In off-road bike sales the positions were reversed, with KTM taking the final podium spot and Suzuki and Kawi following.

The WR450F remained a popular machine and the DR-Z400 had a cracker of a year, while the YZ250 sits as the only senior class two-stroke in the top ten.

MOTOCROSS TOP 10 (JAN-DEC 2015):

1. Yamaha	YZ250F	969
2. Yamaha	YZ450F	868
3. Honda	CRF450R	862
4. Honda	CRF250R	842
5. Kawasaki	KX450F	574
6. Kawasaki	KX250F	551
7. KTM	50 SX	485
8. Yamaha	YZ250	434
9. KTM	85 SX	393
10. KTM	65 SX	387

ENDURO TOP 10 (JAN-DEC 2015):

1. Yamaha	WR450F	1185
2. Suzuki	DR-Z400E	868
3. KTM	500 EXC	670
4. KTM	350 EXC-F	634
5. KTM	300 EXC	585
6. Yamaha	WR250F	474
7. KTM	450 EXC	402
8. Yamaha	WR250R	270
9. Husqvarna	TE300	266
10. Kawasaki	KLX250S	254

AORC Ready To Roll

The off-roads are going to heat up

The 2016 Yamaha AORC calendar has been released and it signals the start of what should be a big year of racing. The two Yamaha teams, CDR and Active8, will no doubt trade blows and the KTM team will be getting used to life with Toby as a rally rider as Tye Simmonds and Daniel Sanders push to become top dog. The Four Day falls between the fourth and fifth rounds, which is unusually early but should feature some prime tracks and hills in Mansfield, Victoria.

2016 AUSTRALIAN OFF-ROAD CHAMPIONSHIP CALENDAR:

Rds 1-2: 19-20 March — Qld
 Rds 3-4: 23-24 April — SA
 Rds 5-6: 18-19 June — NSW
 Rds 7-8: 23-24 July — Vic
 Rds 9-10: 13-14 August — NSW
 Rds 11-12: 10-11 September — Vic
 A4DE 11-14 May, Vic



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Throughout 2015, 21,513 Husqvarnas were sold, which handsomely topped the 16,337 sold in 2014



HUSKY SALES UP

Husqvarna recently announced that it had ended 2015 with worldwide sales figures up 32 per cent compared to 2014. The increase in sales also resulted in a 41 per cent increase in annual turnover. Throughout 2015, 21,513 Husqvarnas were sold, which handsomely topped the 16,337 sold in 2014.

Husky released new motocross models in 2015 and has since grabbed its first-ever Open Class Supercross win and also has the 701 Supermoto and Enduro waiting to hit the roads and trails

in Oz. There may have been some dark days for Husky but it's undeniable that the famous name hasn't experienced the success it's enjoying right now on the trails and track for many years.

In other good news for Husky, Aussie rider Josh Strang has signed on for the Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory off-road team to pilot an FC450 in the GNCC series. Strang finished third in 2015 and with team mates like Mike Brown and Colton Haaker for 2016, no doubt he'll be pushing to go a couple of places better.



TOURATECH ADVENTURE CHALLENGE

Do you have what it takes
to be the best?

If you're up for all things adventure, from checking out swish machines to taking on some skills challenges, then the Touratech Adventure Challenge is for you. Held from March 19 in the beautiful Victorian town of Bright, the event offers not only a chance to get hands-on with a range of adventure bikes and some of the freshest gear from a heap of manufacturers, but also the opportunity to test your riding skills in the challenge and win \$1000 — and be named the best adventure rider in Oz!

For more info go to touratech.com.au — we may just see you at the event.

2016 TOURATECH ADVENTURE CHALLENGE PROGRAM FRIDAY, MARCH 18

12pm-5pm	Displays open and Test rides commence
12pm-4pm	Touratech Adventure Challenge registration open
7.30am	START Challengers briefing and Adventure Challenge begins

SATURDAY, MARCH 19

9.00am	Displays open and Test rides commence
3.00pm	FINISH Adventure Challenge — Competitors return to Pioneer Park
4.30pm	Test rides finish
4.30-6.30pm	Touratech Adventure Challenge Finals
7.30-8.30pm	The day's video footage and photos screened
8pm onwards	Presentations and thanks. Replay video and photos

Meet Tom THE BANDIT

The helmet/action camera market is more crowded than a can of beans these days. There are all sorts of shapes and sizes and of course they all claim to be the best that has ever been.

Most cameras you can buy are at least reasonably good nowadays. High-resolution video is the norm, battery life is getting better with each generation and the ease of use is more of a priority.

Tom Tom is a company best known for its GPS units but it's also in the fitness watch business and now the action camera market with the Bandit. We took the Bandit on a bunch of rides and the first thing we have to say is that the video quality (up to 4K) is excellent. And at 16MP the still photos pop as well.

The camera is one of the easier units to use, with a good screen on top that displays the menu and current status and large, prominent buttons that are easy to find with gloves on. The build quality is good and while nobody can yet match the GoPro mounts, the Tom Tom has a unique system that can, in fact, mate with a GoPro mount, which is a nice touch.

The camera can hook up to your phone via Bluetooth, where you can edit and post to social media on

A helmet cam for the adv man

the spot. Another option is to take advantage of the clever self-editing function, which is actuated by just shaking the camera and boom, and an edit of your video is made by the camera itself. Also built into the Bandit are sensors for speed, G-force, altitude, rotation and heartbeat so at the end of a ride you can log and share an insane amount of information. You can also tag a section of video at the push of a button so you can find it again easily after the ride — most likely the time your mate dumped his bike into a creek.

The only major downfall of the Bandit is that it doesn't sit in a clear casing like a GoPro or Sony, and is therefore susceptible to lens damage by roost or trees etc. There is a covering over the lens that screws on and can be replaced if damaged, but we scratched it pretty quickly and easily and the camera itself looked a little second-hand after just two trail rides. Also, a good whack from a small branch just about knocked it off its mount so for us the Bandit would suit the adventure rider more than the trail or motocross rider.

In fact, given the camera really is



Top quality and feature-packed but not impossible to understand



You can take advantage of the clever self-editing function, which is actuated by just shaking the camera

pretty intuitive and easy to use, and that the average adventure rider is an older gentleman (yeah right!), the Tom Tom is a good option for those who appreciate something that's top quality and feature-packed but not impossible to understand. The GPS function is also a big selling point for the adventure stuff, but while the standard lens cover is splash-proof it isn't waterproof. However, there is an optional cover should you get stuck in one of those miserable biblical storms.

This is a good camera with a great software/app landscape to edit within and then send out into the world with a huge amount of information attached or just a raw video.



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FIVE TIPS

ADVENTURE READY

1.

Check the weather. It's the first thing you've got to do and don't just check one source. If you're on social media, Higgins Storm Chasing is a useful tool on Facebook and the Morecast app is also a good resource to check and keep up to date in real time.

2.

Try and time riding hours to avoid when kangaroos are most active, which is early morning and just before and after sunset. Goats seem to be less of a hazard but roos are just idiots. It's not possible to stress this point too much because even a small roo can bust you and your bike, but hitting a big one at 100kph is not something you want to think about. If you're out when they are, just slow down.

3.

The condition of your tyres is obviously important. If you're out for a week-long ride but your tyres look like they've got a hangover after a three-night bender, swap them out. Make sure you choose the right tyres for the conditions, too. When things get wet and the red clay rears its ugly head, a more aggressive tread will be appreciated. Learn as much as you can about the tracks and trails you'll be riding on. Try and be prepared to be able to adjust your tyre pressures as well — it might just make the worst of the wet a bit easier.

4.

Good adventure gear can make a ride and shitty stuff can break it. We once had a good set of gear but it was all black and single-layered, so when the heat was on it was like being cooked. Good stuff isn't cheap but it covers you with multiple removable layers to cover all conditions, plenty of venting for air flow, a good fit that isn't too restrictive and a tough build quality. Pockets are handy but on an adventure ride you've usually got spaces in top bags or panniers etc, so don't pick one jacket over another simply because it has 52 pockets. A good helmet is imperative — one that can obviously protect you on the road or off, but also one that isn't too loud on the inside and isn't easily buffeted by the wind.

5.

Let someone know where you're going and when you expect to return. Australia is a mighty big country and it's too easy to get lost and never found again. Carrying a SPOT GPS messenger is a smart idea and they aren't expensive these days. The SPOT can send a message confirming you're OK or in trouble, as well as allowing real-time tracking so people can see where you are at any time of the day. It literally could save your life. Mobile service isn't great in many parts of Oz, so don't rely on your phone to get you out of trouble. To get the best from a phone, look for a blue tick which denotes it's better than average in country areas.



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- Efficiently removes all traces of grease, dust, soil, mosquitoes, brake pad residues etc.
- Dries evenly.
- Leaves a dry anti-corrosion film.
- Protects paintwork and varnish.
- Biodegradable: MOTUL MOTOWASH is environment-friendly. Biodegradable in 23 days at 99 per cent (inherent biodegradability and ultimate biodegradability) according to OCDE 302B method.
- Spray generously all over the whole motorcycle using the "wide jet" position on the gun.
- Allow to work for a few minutes.
- Rinse with water, jet or steam pressure.
- For very dirty parts, repeat the operation using the position "directed jet" on the gun and rub with a sponge or a rag.
- Use a soft cloth to obtain a perfect finish.



FOX POLARPAW GLOVES

Fox Racing's polar paw glove is a great cold-weather solution when you want to maintain the dexterity that comes with a regular off-road glove but have increased protection from the cold.

- Double layer clarino palm
- Silicone lever grip
- Hook and loop closure
- Padded knuckle
- Warmth / insulation
- Clarino thumb guard



ACERBIS X BRAKE DISC COVER

The X-Brake, Acerbis' newest front disc cover, provides unparalleled protection, strength and good looks. It is designed to keep sticks, rocks and other debris from damaging or becoming tangled in the front rotor. It features ample venting to keep the brake cool in all conditions and offers extended coverage to provide protection to the brake caliper. It's constructed of durable polypropylene. The bike-specific aluminium mounting kit is sold separately.



RK 520 EXW CHAIN

The EXW chain is specifically designed for off-road vehicles and ATVs/Quads and is the best high-speed, extreme-heat, off-road performance chain available today. It's developed to survive the abrasive conditions that exist in hostile off-road environments. It features XW ring seals composed of nitrite butadiene with three contact lips and two convex inner/outer stabilisers. This means three lubrication pools to protect against high-speed abrasion and the loss of lubricant under extreme conditions.



15L SAFARI TANK

This 15L fuel tank to suit WR/F, YZ-F and YZ/FX models offers a huge increase in fuel by doubling the standard fuel tank capacity and delivering a corresponding increase in fuel range, allowing owners to ride harder for longer. Designed to closely replicate the ergonomics of a standard bike, the new tank replaced the air box cover but retains the radiator shrouds. Air flow to the radiators is not affected.



YAMAHA 60TH ANNIVERSARY JACKET

Limited-edition jacket celebrating Yamaha's 60th anniversary.



REDVERZ SOLO EXPEDITION TENT

For those who have perfected the art of being alone, Redverz Gear introduces a one-person tent, the Solo Expedition Motorcycle Tent. The original Redverz design has shed a few pounds and inches, resulting in a more compact tent with a 90in x 41in sleeping area, just right for a single camper. The legendary Redverz garage remains unchanged at 102in x 36in. It features area-wide headroom and is tall enough to stand in and house a fully loaded adventure or cruiser bike.

KITE ELITE WHEEL SETS

Kite Elite wheel sets are made and assembled in Italy with Kite's very own highly resistant billet aluminium lightweight hubs, Italian-made Alpina galvanic-treatment zinc-plating steel spokes, SKF bearings and Excel Signature Series rims.

All Kite wheel sets are fitted with a complete set of bearings, seals and internal spacers and built with a 36-hole rear hub with Honda dimension spokes.

Kite wheels are produced to the highest standards and used by the likes of KTM Factory Racing, Joe Gibbs Racing and CDR Yamaha.



WR-450F

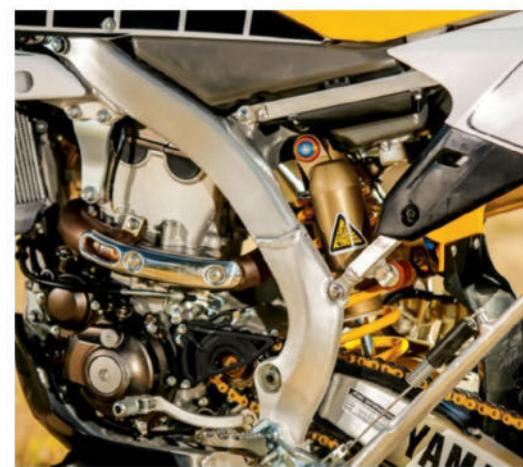
We asked for a YZ450F for the bush and Yamaha responded with a fire-breathing WR450F that will be remembered as one of the best yet.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY **GREG SMITH**



A large, dense green bush with many small leaves and stems. It is positioned in the center of the frame, with a road visible in the lower foreground and a field of green grass in the background.

VEAP-
NISSED



Let's shorten this process! You're asking, "Is it good enough to buy?" My answer: go buy one today. Honestly, the new 2016 WR450F is loads better than last year's version; it's remarkable. The engine, the suspension and the ergonomics are all so much better than the previous model that there's no need to read any further — reading wastes precious ride time!

The WR450F is Yamaha's rock in its off-road range, topping the sales figures each year. So in saying that, you can imagine just how hard it would be to replace such a popular bike and bring a truly competition-skewed version of this sales leader to life. Imagine a boardroom filled with people ready to appease the average trailrider and not lose any mass market share by introducing a hard-edged motocross-inspired bike.

All I can say is that those people must still be trapped in that boardroom, because for 2016 they have released exactly that — but this one has a great temperament.

The WR is basically a YZ450F but with a few modifications to enduroise it. Also, so as not to alienate any variety of rider abilities, Yamaha has been extremely smart with the modifications to make it good enough for a Josh Green or a Greg Smith. The

2015 WR was slowly starting to lose touch with the European competitors even though sales were good, and on the race track less and less riders were seen on the WR and more adopted the YZ450 or the competition-derived WR250F if they needed rego. I'm sure that 2016 will see more than a few racers sell their YZs and turn up on WR450s to the start line of natural-terrain motocross, enduro and trail bike events.

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JUST LAUNCHED

Barkbusters JET

A photograph of a motorcyclist in full gear riding an orange KTM dirt bike. The motorcycle is equipped with a black Barkbusters JET handguard. The background is a dry, open landscape under a clear blue sky.

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**EASY FIT
EASY PRICE
FULL WRAP HANDGUARD**

AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL BIKE SHOP

The bike does look completely different to last year's — even your nanna will be able to tell them apart



ENGINE — THE MUMBO ROOM

Gone is the old five-valve engine and in its place is the current reverse-cylinder YZ450F four-valve DOHC engine using the same cases, cylinder, conrod, piston, head and camshafts. Its compact design allows for the fuel tank to be mounted under the seat and the air cleaner to be placed in front of the rider, reducing the amount of dirt an air filter would normally see and increasing its resilience to deep-water crossings. The WR450F also has a larger stator and a revised decomp mechanism to help reduce the load on the starting components. The engine mounting plates have been decreased in width from the YZ's 8mm to 6mm for a little more flex. A wide ratio 5-speed gearbox replaces the close ratio 5-speed motocross version. The clutch has been modified for the demands of enduro with specific friction plates and lighter springs for greater feel. There's also a larger-diameter clutch cable as well as a simple but effective modification to the clutch basket to help it retain

oil, aiding with cooling and durability. Engine cooling hasn't been left out either, with new radiators and a thermo fan for those deep jungle runs

CHASSIS — IT'S BEEN FRAMED

The frame is the same version used by the YZ450F but with a side-stand bracket. The forks are (arguably) the class-leading KYB, speed-sensitive, closed-chamber model fitted with 4.5N/mm springs. Out back is a KYB shock — it was a gold colour on our 60th anniversary test bike — that is fitted with a 56N/mm spring coloured yellow... fancy! The valving has been updated to suit the majority of WR riders, with plush initial travel and a controlled mid-range leading into superior bottoming resistance. A set of triple clamps with a 25mm offset helps with rider feedback, as do the handlebar mounts. There's a 2mm spacer mounted between the headstem locknut and the top triple clamp to help increase weight onto the front end. Brakes haven't been left out either, with the front-brake rotor being



THINGS I LIKED

- Spacious ergos
- The power/torque
- Reasonably quiet
- Straight-line stability
- Brake feedback/feel
- Smooth suspension action

THINGS I DIDN'T LIKE

- Stock tyres
- Induction noise (wear ear plugs)
- I'd change the grips (No waffle)

WRF LONG RANGER

Add versatility to your WRF/YZF with the New 15L Safari fuel Tank. The oversized tank fits perfectly with standard radiator shrouds without restricting Airflow to the radiators or affecting the airbox.

Fits:

2016 WR450F

2015-2016 WR250F

Available now at your local authorised Yamaha Dealer or view more details on Y-Shop.



There's a strong argument that a 49-tooth rear sprocket may work better for some people, but the current gearing has been said to take a rider to beyond 170kph



increased to 270mm to help aid lever feel and overall braking performance.

RIDE EXPERIENCE

The bike does look completely different to last year's — even your nanna will be able to tell them apart. Once you've thrown the leg over [the bike, not your nanna!] you'll feel just how spacious the ride position is. Once you've then set the handlebars to a location that suits you the best [one of four positions], you'll notice just how much room is left to slide forward, plus the pegs have been lowered 5mm to help add to the spaciousness. A set of "full wrap" handguards have been added to the enduro kit to save your fingers and to

give you the confidence you need to argue with trees of any size.

The bike doesn't feel any thinner than the 2015 model but it feels much lighter once you're moving. That's until you whack the throttle hard and in that split second, just as your lower anatomy starts to feel weird, you'll know you're on a serious 450. It's also worth mentioning, however, that the mechanical muffler seems to keep it pretty quiet without sacrificing loads of power.

Speaking of power, it's extremely linear and very responsive from the bottom end all the way into the over-rev. That annoying "pop back and stall" the old EFI engine had occasionally when loaded up at low RPM is gone.



Yamaha YZ450s are known for their predictable steering on the motocross track and the WR has definitely inherited that feeling

The way the motor has been tuned makes it feel extremely torquey, which is something I'm sure most riders will love. Not to forget that the Yamaha Power Tuner is available to tune the engine to suit your riding style and technique.

The 5-speed shifts so smoothly and I didn't feel that any of the ratios were too far apart at all. A 6-speed would be nice, mind you, but I certainly don't think it's a necessity. There's also a strong argument that a 49-tooth rear sprocket may work better for some

people, but the current gearing has been said to take a rider to speeds beyond 170kph!

I'm 185cm and 82kg, and feeling the suspension for the first time I thought it was reasonably plush, but I like to have more than a little feedback in the handlebars. As this is more of a competition bike, setting up the rider sag is extremely important. We recommend 115mm sag and if you're a little bit bigger than the likes of AJ Roberts and Josh Green, you may find it good to experiment with your clicker settings

and make them a little bit firmer than standard. We do recommend getting someone to help you set up your suspension as this bike will reward you straight away.

Yamaha YZ450s are known for their predictable steering on the motocross track and the WR has definitely inherited that feeling. The seat also allows you to move far enough up to the front of the bike to help in slippery conditions. I don't find the Metzeler 6 Days Extreme the best choice on the WRF and as a result the mid-corner handling does suffer. Replacing the original tyres with something a little more competitive, like a Pirelli Scorpion XC Mid/Soft or similar, would really

lift the performance on single-trail sections. Make that choice based on the conditions you ride in.

Finally, fuel tank capacity and estimated distance are always a valid space for arguments. The WR450F has a 7.5-litre tank and is good for anywhere between 80-100km. At the pace these bikes are screaming out to be ridden, 80-90km is a massive ride without a stop. If you need to ride further on one tank, a long-range option should be available through Yamaha by the time you're reading this.

The bike will come out in two colours: traditional blue and a special "Australia only" Yellow 60th Anniversary Edition.

PRICE

- Traditional Yamaha Blue graphic: \$12,999 RRP.
- 60th Anniversary Yellow graphic: \$13,199 RRP.

2016 YAMAHA WR450F TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Engine: Single-cylinder, liquid-cooled, 4-stroke, DOHC, 4 valves
Displacement: 449cc
Bore x stroke: 97.0mm x 60.8mm
Compression ratio: 12.5 : 1
Lubrication system: Wet sump
Clutch type: Wet, multiple disc
Induction: Fuel injection, 44mm throttle body
Ignition system: TCI
Starter system: Electric and kick
Transmission system: Constant mesh, 5-speed
Frame: Semi double cradle
Front suspension: Telescopic forks, travel 310mm
Caster angle: 26° 20
Trail: 114mm
Rear suspension: Swingarm, travel 318mm
Front brake: Hydraulic single disc, Ø 270mm
Rear brake: Hydraulic single disc, Ø 245mm
Front tyre: 90/90-21 54M
Rear tyre: 130/90-18 69S+M
Overall length: 2165mm
Overall width: 825mm
Overall height: 1280mm
Seat height: 965mm
Wheel base: 1465mm
Minimum ground clearance: 325mm
Wet weight: 117kg dry — or including full oil and fuel tank 123kg
Fuel tank capacity: 7.5 litres
Oil tank capacity: 0.95 litres
Warranty: Three months, parts only
RRP: Yamaha Blue \$12,999; 60th Anniversary Yellow \$13,199



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BMW F 800 GS

Ride Away \$16,990*



BMW F 800 GS Adv.

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BMW R 1200 GS

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*2015-plated models only, 8 January - 31 March 2016. Terms and Conditions apply, see bmwmotorrad.com.au/rideaway2015



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CAVE TO COAST

STORY SHANE BOOTH PHOTOGRAPHY DAMIEN ASHENHURST/BMW

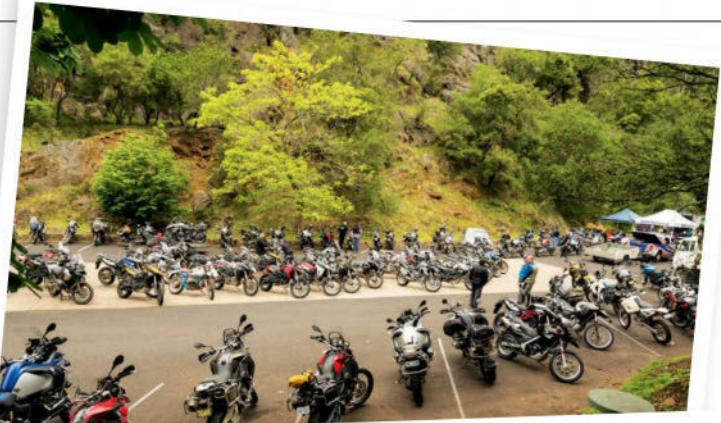
We slot into the 2015 BMW GS Safari for a few days and set our adventure riding on fire once more



The BMW GS Safari has evolved into an event that is enjoyed by hundreds of riders every year. Having ridden the Safari in the past, when the opportunity arose to join in on the first two days of the 2015 edition I jumped at the chance. There is an atmosphere on the GS Safari that you just can't replicate when you go for a weekend ride with your mates. Two hundred riders, all on similar machines, and there's nothing to do other than enjoy the hell out of riding. Combine that with the fact you are well supported and have great routes mapped out for you daily and I challenge you to participate and not return the following year.

The ride kicked off at Jenolan Caves in New South Wales, an iconic tourist attraction only a few hours west of Sydney up in the Blue Mountains. It's an ideal setting to get you in the mood for adventure. Twisty, mountainous roads leading into the caves are fun on a bike and then you enter through a huge cave and pop out at the Alpine-style accommodation.

Official proceedings begin on the Sunday night with the pre-Safari dinner and briefing. Here you get inundated with information on the week ahead. The procedures for everything from luggage management to emergencies are explained, along with how to navigate the routes. As lead rider, the legendary Chris Cater gives you a rundown on what he uses to mark the route in his own unique way, which is always well received. Here



Yep, we have coffee available on the go. People laugh at us then come and beg for one





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SAVE \$400

OUTLAW 50

- 4-Stroke Engine - 49cc
- Electric Start with Backup Kick-Starter
- Polaris Variable Transmission
- Daytime Running Lights
- Adjustable Speed Limiter

INCLUDES
SAFETY GEAR



FREE
SAFETY
WHIP FLAG



FREE
YOUTH HELMET
(2 WITH RZR 170)



FREE
RIDER TRAINING
INSTRUCTIONAL DVD



OUTLAW 110

- 4-stroke 110 EFI engine
- Polaris Variable Transmission
- Daytime Running Lights
- Adjustable Speed Limiter
- Safety Tether & Horn

\$3,695

SPORTSMAN 110

- 4-stroke 110 EFI engine
- Electric Start with Backup Kick-Starter
- Polaris Variable Transmission
- Daytime Running Lights
- Adjustable Speed Limiter

\$3,695

RZR 170

- EFI 4-Stroke Engine - 169cc
- Polaris Variable Transmission
- Side Nets & Seat Belts
- Daytime Running Lights
- Adjustable Speed Limiter
- Roll Over Protection Structure

\$5,995

*Participating Dealers only. Offer ends 31/03/2016. Always ensure age appropriate use of ATVs and RZR – Outlaw 50 Age 6 or older.
Outlaw 110, Sportsman 110 and RZR 170 Age 10 or older.



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It was honestly one of the best days of adventure riding I've experienced

you also learn about the other battle you will most likely face for the entire week — the battle between red wine and good times vs sleep and a clear head for the next day's riding. The struggle is real, people, but it's a fun war to fight.

Needless to say we probably came off second best regarding the aforementioned battle and headed off on Monday morning towards the rear of the group. A common assumption about Safari is that it must be very busy on the ride with around 200 riders, but that's not the case. It's not a group start each day but rather a start window that you must leave within. Generally it's between 7.30am to 9am and with this system it's not unusual to ride for long intervals where you don't see another rider.

We dropped our bag off at the luggage truck and began the 278km ride to Mittagong in New South Wales'

Southern Highlands region. The first part of the ride was fun back-road bitumen but it wasn't long before we turned off that and onto some nice flowing gravel roads. This is where you really start to enjoy the riding. Leaving at the rear of the group meant we were catching our share of riders, but most will see you approach and give you a wave past.

The day was a relatively easy one — a great ride to get everyone back into Safari mode and ready for the four days that still remained. We reached Mittagong without incident and retrieved our bags from the luggage truck, checked into our accommodation and dug in to begin the day's bench racing and start the nightly battle. Before we caught up with the crew for dinner, every rider attended the nightly riders briefing which looks back at the day and then covers all that is required for the next day's riding. It's





Here you also learn about the other battle you will most likely face for the entire week — the battle between red wine and good times vs sleep and a clear head for the next day's riding

a good system that keeps a large group generally on the same page. We made a plan to hit the road a little earlier the next day and managed to pack up shop at a reasonable hour.

The second day and my last for the 2015 GS Safari kicked off at Mittagong and finished at the south coast town of Batemans Bay. It was a 293km day with some pretty cool spots to hit along the way. Not long into the ride we pulled up at Bellmore Falls, which was a pretty sweet view and a great spot for a quick coffee via our portable little pod machine. Yep, we have coffee available on the go. People laugh at us then come and beg for one.

We hung with Adam Riemann and watched him in action flying his drone and gathering footage for the event DVD, which is pretty cool to see. The drone is piloted back, gets packed up and thrown on his one-off special-edition "Filming Beast" F 800 GS

Adventure. From there the day sampled just about everything you could possibly want to ride on an adventure bike, from tight back-road bitumen to open gravel roads and then into tighter, more technical forestry.

It was honestly one of the best days of adventure riding I've experienced, topped off with a great photo by the beach with the group of guys we rode with. It was a little more challenging than the previous day and although the overall distance wasn't that huge, the off-road riding meant speeds were down as riders worked their way along the route. You know it's been a great day of riding when you get to the luggage truck and people are totally exhausted yet they have a smile from ear to ear. That's what you saw at the end of day two.

That's where the GS Safari ended for me this year, but it was enough of a refresher to have me waiting on the dates for 2016.



DAKAR DREAMING

TOBY PRICE MAKES HISTORY AND ELEVATES HIS STATUS INTO THE LEGENDARY CATEGORY

STORY BY ASHENHURST PICS BY RED BULL/KTM

Way back in 1977, two very different major sporting events happened: the Centenary test between Australia and England (Australia won), and the Abidjan-Nice Rally. What rally, you ask? Fair enough — it wasn't really that rally that was the major event, but it was the fact that French competitor Thierry Sabine got lost while competing in it. So amazed was he by the landscape he discovered while wandering aimlessly that he went home and devised a route that would become the Paris-Dakar — and thus the greatest off-road race in the world was born. If we made a race every time we got lost there'd be non-stop racing every day of the week.

THOSE THAT CAME BEFORE

Australia has had some great showings at Dakar in the past. Andy Haydon and Andy Caldecott most famously blazed the trail that Toby Price first took in 2015; Haydon became the first Aussie to win a stage and the first to podium in 1998 (such an amazing feat), and in 2005 Caldecott was on fire against some huge names when a 17-minute penalty put that epic pack out of reach. Tragically, Caldecott would be the 23rd fatality of the rally when he was killed competing in 2006.

And thus begins the unlikely story of Toby Price, a rider without a team until MSC Kawasaki threw him a lifeline in off-roads instead of motocross and he repaid them by winning the 2009 AORC title at his first attempt and against the

great Stefan Merriman. More and more titles followed and he followed his then team mate Ben Grabham to the desert, where Grabbo had a hold on Finke with some epic wins. Toby won Finke on his first attempt and it was clear that desert racing sparked something in him.

Then, of course, there was the crash that could have killed him, should have paralysed him but in the end put him out of racing for about a year, and when he returned it went to the back of his mind as he went about winning everything again. And we mean everything. Price is one of the rare breed that can win in the desert one weekend and then get on a two-stroke and win in the trees the next. No doubt he could podium in the motocross as well should the chance arise.



SURPRISE ATTACK

Toby's first crack at Dakar was under the radar to a degree. He wasn't funded by a tonne of money and he wasn't given factory machinery until near the end. He was given a chance to show what he could do and it was up to him to impress. If he failed, that could well have been the end of a dream, if not at least a major setback. That he finished third is nothing short of stunning. He had trouble navigating, had trouble with the language barrier and the constant travel, little time to prepare, etc etc. But he did what it took to get the eye of the Red Bull KTM team and when the great Marc Coma announced his retirement, the powerhouse team offered a ride to Toby.

It was an uphill battle from there to learn navigation, get seat time on the new machine and learn rally from the best, while also competing in Australia, where he once again won Finke and Hattah on a 500EXC (with a smashed foot) as well as the AORC on a 300EXC. And all the while — motocross riders take note — Price remained a fan favourite, always giving them time and acknowledging the adoring kids who would stop him for a chat, photo or autograph wherever he was. Even grimacing in pain at Finke with a shattered ankle, Toby would put his arm around a kid and smile for photo after photo. He wins fans for life and supports kids who share his dream. Future moto weapons who will always remember when Toby Price gave them some time.





DAKAR RALLY 2016 — OVERALL STANDINGS

1. Toby Price (KTM) 48h09m15s
2. Stefan Svitko (KTM) +39m41s
3. Pablo Quintanilla (Husqvarna) +48m48s
4. Kevin Benavides (Honda) +54m47s
5. Helder Rodrigues (Yamaha) +55m44s
6. Adrien van Beveren (Yamaha) +1h46m29s
7. Antoine Meo (KTM) +1h56m47s
8. Gerard Farres (KTM) +2h01m00s
9. Ricky Brabec (Honda) +2h11m27s
10. Armand Monsoon (KTM) +3h27m49s

All of a sudden he was in third and the two guys ahead of him must have been wondering, "How fast can this crazy Aussie ride?"



GAME ON

The 2016 Dakar Rally got off to a rough start, the first stage being called off due to severe wet weather. But Toby blasted out of the gate with purpose, taking the win in stage two and leading at every checkpoint. "It's good to get one stage win out of the way, but we're looking forward to being smooth and consistent the rest of the week and seeing how we go," said Price, trying not to get ahead of himself.

He took a conservative approach to stage three and dropped back to 36th, but without too many concerns and with the knowledge that a main rival in Honda's Joan Berrada lost the lead

through a penalty — not the first he'd receive in the race.

Next came an intense marathon stage and then in stage four Berrada was again penalised; no doubt an angel in Honda heaven died as he was on fire throughout the stage.

Toby then struck hard in stage five and all of a sudden he was third. The two guys ahead of him must have been wondering, "How fast can this crazy Aussie ride?" Well, fast enough to win stage six as well, and now he sat in second by just 30 seconds. We all sat glued to timing, wondering if this could be possible.

Honda's woes continued as Goncalves crashed and Toby charged to the lead. Facing down another marathon stage, Price gave his rival some respect, saying, "He's a real strong competitor and he's got a lot more navigation skills than what I do, but we're trying our best and keeping ourselves in front as much as we can."

THE END IS NEAR

By the end of stage nine Price led by 25 minutes and while nothing at all is certain in Dakar, things were looking like falling into place and Toby had made it through a tricky navigational stage well ahead.

From here Toby rode smart, saying, "I took it easy because my motorcycle struggled in the heat yesterday. I also focused on navigating. I can ride a bit more defensively now — no need to attack to gain time like I did yesterday."

Although he didn't win it, he extended his lead on stage 11 to 35 minutes and by now mainstream media was on it and the moto fans were salivating. This was history in the making and celebrities and famous sports people everywhere were throwing their support Toby's way. With only two stages left, Price had Australia's attention.

He extended his lead yet again in stage 12 with a cautious, but still crazy-fast, approach. "We had a couple of excursions off the track a couple

of times so we thought we'd whack it down and make sure that we get to the finish," he said. The 28-year-old had one more stage to go.

HE BLOODY DID IT!

After 48 hours of racing, Toby pulled in fourth overall in the final stage to claim a victory in the 2016 Dakar Rally. "I don't know what to say, I don't know what to think. I'm in shock; I never would've thought I could win this race in my second attempt. This is incredible for my family, my friends and my fans back in Australia," he said.

"Being the first Australian to win the Dakar is just insane. I would never have imagined this two years ago. Finishing the rally is already a triumph. Winning it is amazing. I tackled the race in true Aussie style. I attacked when I had to, when the time was right, and I kept an eye on my bike during the all-important marathon stages. I also navigated rather well. I hope this is just the start to win again. It won't be easy so I've got to savour this victory."

Somewhere in Australia, a kid who has a photo of Toby on his wall or from a time they met somewhere and Price put his arm around him for a snapshot got the racing bug — a dream of Dakar, Finke and off-road racing sparked up inside. The legacy. But there's much more to come in the Toby Price story before then. Well done, mate... you are a legend.

FEATURE:

FINKE TESTING THE WR450F



A close-up, low-angle shot of a red dirt track. In the background, a large, gnarled tree with sparse, yellowish-green leaves stands against a bright, hazy sky. The dirt in the foreground is a vibrant orange-red, with some darker, shadowed areas and small, dry plants scattered across it.

STORY & PHOTOS BY DAMIEN ASHENHURST

DESERT DEVILS

We take the chance to watch the new WR450F being tested on the most inhospitable track in Oz. Can it do the job in the heat?



The previous model wasn't up to the task but the 2016 WR-F is every bit the modern bike

Race team testing is kind of a dark secret to outsiders. My memory of the days that guys like Stanton, Johnson, Bayle and Bailey ruled the famed Honda Land facility in the States is vivid but mostly fantasy, because what went on was a secret. But the days of intense data collection and endless testing are gone — in Australia anyway. You'd be surprised how little testing a factory motocross team might do; a few days here and there but that's it. The offroad guys on average do more testing because of the differing terrain and formats they face through

the year, but the big one that needs the most effort is Finke.

At the point where you're pushing for a win, a team can't just rock up and race. Through the recent years, KTM set the bar high with constant and intense testing throughout the year on the mighty track. Through the persistence — and he is the most persistent team boss you'll ever meet — of AJ Roberts and his Active8 Yamaha team, the blue crew have been putting in all the effort required to take the win in the desert and we took a rare opportunity to travel to Alice Springs to see how they go about testing for arguably the biggest single off-road race of the year.



DESE



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HEADING TOWARDS HEAT

We got off the plane in Alice Springs to be met with a sweet summer day that sat steady on 40 degrees. I was on the same flight as team riders Josh Green and Beau Ralston — we're all from the Newcastle/Hunter Valley region — and I assumed they would meet up with the team truck and spend some time debriefing or working on the bike, or just kill some time before they started testing the next day.

AJ Roberts had driven the truck from Queensland along with team mechanic Brandon Frail, and they weren't there to muck around. As I made my way to my accommodation, which featured an air-conditioner operating within an inch of its life and smelled like someone had installed a dead gopher as a filter, I got a call from AJ. "We're heading down the track now. Can you come so we can use your car?" "Now?" I asked. "Yeah, that's what we're here for."

So within minutes of getting off the plane the boys had got suited-up and we were heading down the track in the blistering heat to start the first day of testing for the 2016 Finke Desert Race.

Imagine if the Anaheim Supercross whoop section took a right turn, let alone ran for kilometre after kilometre under a sun determined to cook all living things





WHY THE WR-F?

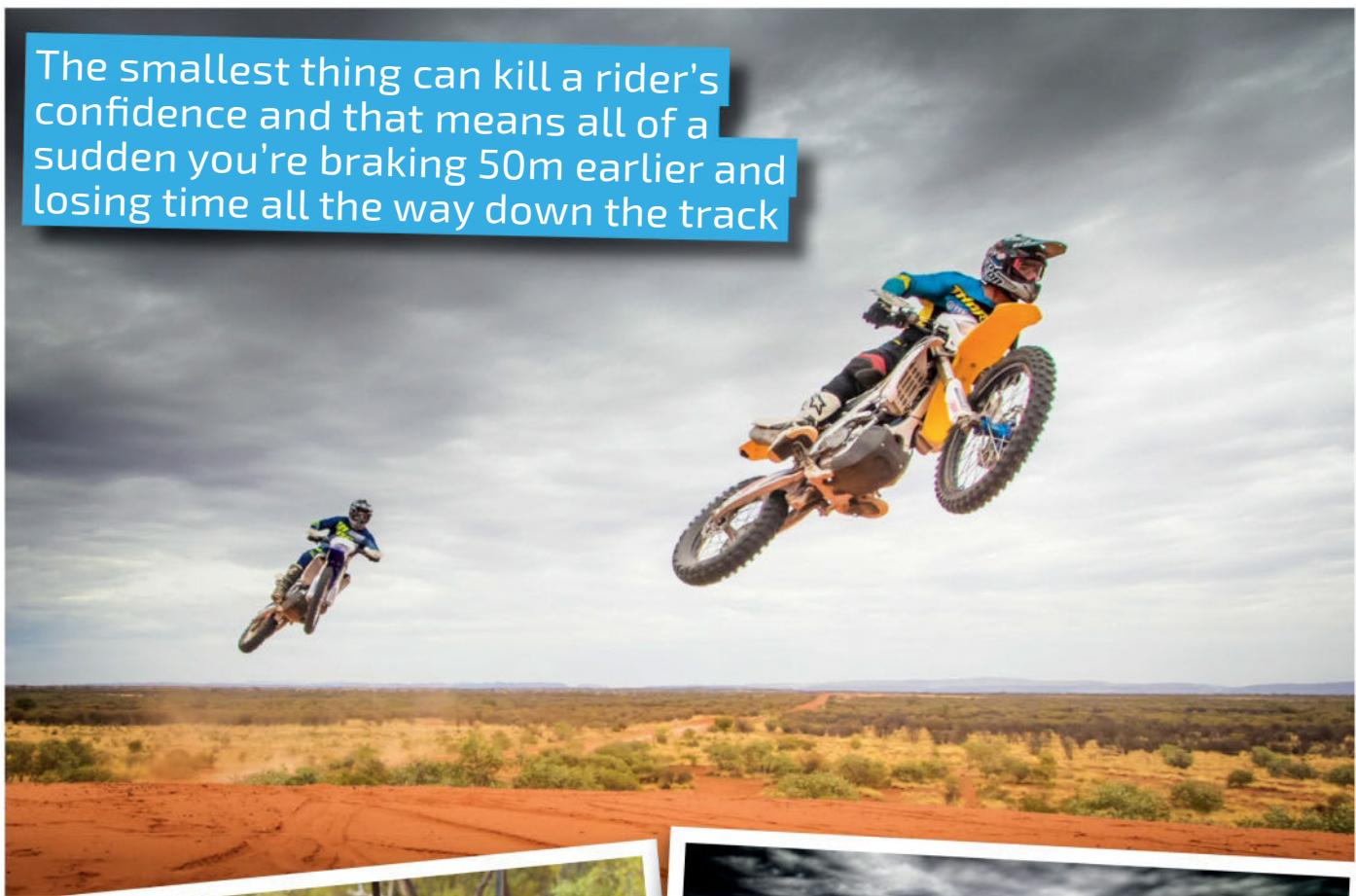
The team has been racing YZ450Fs at Finke but it makes sense that they run the biggest-selling 450 enduro bike in Oz in an off-road race. The previous model didn't have the power characteristics to match the reverse cylinder in the YZ-F, but the 2016 WR-F is every bit the modern bike with very few compromises made. But the only real way to find out if the bike is up to task is to take it to the track and put it through its paces.

The team loved the 2015 YZ450F – it was a brilliant Finke bike. The team had three years developing and racing that bike and found one of its greatest attributes was that it was

easy to get solid top-end power out of the engine. The 2015 race bike was taken to Alice Springs to offer a baseline of where the team was at and where they could go from there. There was some work to do because both Josh and Beau loved their 2015 YZ-Fs and the team isn't about to take a step backwards.

I've never watched testing at this level up close and seeing it done on that track just adds to the intensity. The boys would be sent out with settings they know they won't like and asked to ride as fast as they can on one of the most dangerous tracks in the world to get an idea of whether one thing they may have never tried

The smallest thing can kill a rider's confidence and that means all of a sudden you're braking 50m earlier and losing time all the way down the track



before might work or at least lead to a setting that is an improvement.

It's pretty nerve-wracking to watch Josh and Beau riding at race-pace on a track like that with settings you know they've never tried. They pass you at 150kph on those evil whoops and then brake and corner and head up a hill — all on whoops. No bike is designed to do this. It almost defies belief that they can brake from 150, loading the front end as they lean into a corner and power back on as the corner opens and the track rises... all on top of the most famous whoop section in Australia. Imagine if the Anaheim Supercross whoop section took a right turn, let alone ran for kilometre after kilometre under a sun determined to cook all living things. Finke is nuts.

GAINING GROUND

The first thing the team wanted to do was get a feeling for the frame and suspension. The 2016 YZ450F has a refined frame, so given the WR-F runs the same chassis, they needed to know how it would behave. The team had also never used a wide-ratio gearbox at Finke and given the ability for the bike to pull at high speed, they wanted to know if it could handle the job.

One of the clearest advantages the WR450F has over the YZ-F is the electric start. At Finke this provides its biggest gains in the fuel stops. The KTM riders can roll in and out with ease while the Yamaha guys have been frustrated trying to kick-start a hot YZ450F, sometimes for 30 frantic

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and precious seconds before it fires. That's just free space for KTM and the WR-F even that up.

Day after day the boys swapped shock springs, fork springs, changed sag settings and clickers until they got closer to a bike that felt right. As AJ puts it, "The smallest thing can kill a rider's confidence and that means all of a sudden you're braking 50m earlier and losing time all the way down the track."

The bike needs to be spot-on and exactly what the rider wants and needs for the best of the best to ride this track at the sustained speeds that they do.

Even though the triple clamps on the WR-F have a different offset to the 2015 YZ-F, the guys were happy with the way they felt — a testament to the new bike and just how quickly they could take it from a bush weapon to a desert racer. AJ explained that from the initial launch in the bush, the bike spent only one day in the workshop before it was ready to hit the Finke track.

LOSING POUNDS

The WR-F is a little heavier than the YZ-F but some simple changes took a lot of weight off the bike. The titanium motocross muffler was fitted and the heavy lead battery was replaced with a lithium battery which withstood the heat perfectly. The speedo is removed and the Barkbusters are replaced with open handguards as the team gets close to taking about five kilos off the WR-F. The only object of notable

weight that was added to the bike is a steering damper.

As the week closed, the guys had taken a stock WR-F and put together a bike that both riders were super pumped on. They loved the 2015 YZ-F but the WR-F is every bit the racer they had hoped. With some work on springs and valving, a little weight loss and a change of gearing from 13/50 to 15/50, they had built the bike they hope to win Finke on this year.

GAME ON IN THE SANDS

From my point of view, what I saw was impressive on a number of levels. Everything was done at 100 per cent. Risks were taken but the boys never backed off. They weren't interested in taking on a bike they weren't happy with to help Yamaha sell more. They love the YZ-F and this had to be an impressive bike to get them off the motocross machine. And these guys are honest whether I'm around or not. If they don't like something they'll tell you. And they'll elaborate on it.

These guys flogged the bike to the point where I thought someone could get hurt bad if the bike wasn't up to it. There were some solid sideways moments but the guys pushed and pushed and it all came together. It wasn't a complete unknown given its close relation to the YZ-F, but I learnt that Finke is a game of seconds and inches as much as any other racing and they worked to make sure the WR-F would gain them ground and get them closer to the win.



Everything was done
at 100 per cent. Risks
were taken but the boys
never backed off



TEST:

BMW R1200GS ADVENTURE



HIGH-TECH TRAVEL

BMW'S R 1200 GS ADVENTURE HAS ALL THE BELS AND WHISTLES, BUT WHEN IT COMES TO WHEELS ON THE GROUND IS IT MORE THAN A 1200CC COMPUTER? YEAH... IT REALLY IS

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ASHENHURST

ER



BMW's R1200GS needs no introduction. The number-one choice in adventure for a long time, the GS is the benchmark all others, from the Ténéré to the DR, are measured against, fairly or not. The R1200GS Adventure pushes things a little more, building on the brilliant base but going further to present one of the most complete packages to ever roll off a dealer's floor and head into the dirt.

The striking look of the GSA reminds me of a fully loaded Apache helicopter. Now I'm well aware that not everyone likes the look of a GS and some find them revolting from front to back, but the sight of one just does it for me and I think the reason is two-fold. First, I just straight love the shape of it. Second, I know what it represents. I've done thousands of kilometres on one GS or another through the years and each ride has left me with memories and

experiences that I'll never forget. That's kind of the magic behind any great bike; the promise of adventure and the ability to make it happen in a reliable, capable and comfortable way.

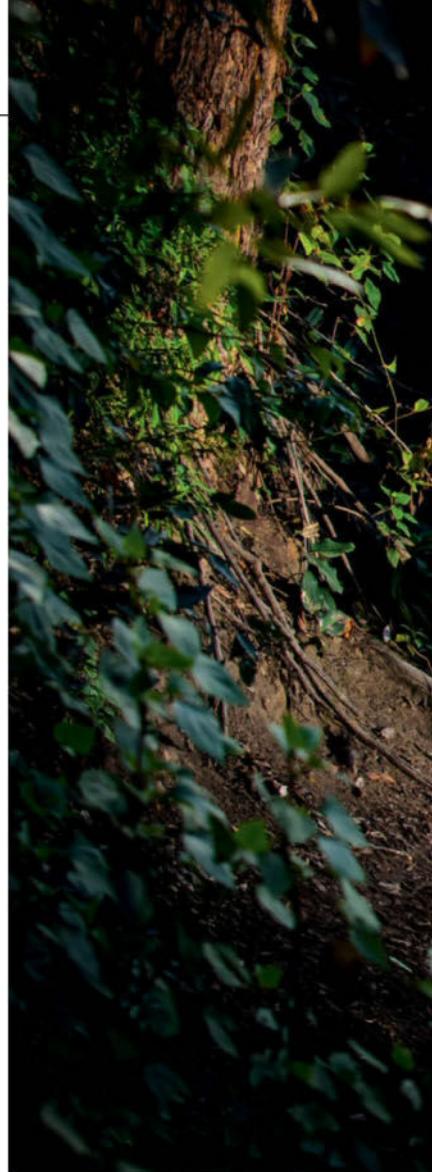
Staring down a day's route sheet on an R1200GSA is a pretty smug experience when you have the feeling there isn't much that can stop you. The 30-litre fuel tank gives you enormous range (approximately 600km), the stability of the bike takes the trepidation from sand sections and the higher air intake means deep river crossings aren't a possible death sentence to the engine. That's not to say a bike this size can't be a handful. Wet clay isn't fun (is it ever?) and off-camber sections can be sphincter-tightening, but in my experience the most common form of oh-shit moment on a GS comes from overcooking a corner and having to rein in the speed as well as take the corner.

The striking look of the GSA reminds me of a fully loaded Apache helicopter

IN THE RIGHT MODE MOOD

The GSA ergos are open and comfortable, with wide bars and a brilliant seat. I've never been a huge fan of the way you need to point your feet inwards to get a solid contact with the brake and gear levers, but it does become second nature after a while and only really presents a problem when you're standing up. The instrument clusters on either side of the bars are easy to use and once you get your head around the astonishing amount of things you can control, adjust and actuate at the tip of your finger/thumb, the GSA really starts to come into its own.

There was a time when the CAN bus electronics system garnered scepticism, but it's here on the GSA with everything locked and loaded that you truly get an idea of what it can do for you. I don't feel anything is there for the sake of it and while I don't constantly change things while I ride, that's not the only point to it. It's there so that you can set up the bike to feel the way you want it to feel in any terrain or conditions.



You may want ABS where I don't or a firmer feeling in the shock or traction control, and you can take two identical bikes and have them feel and perform totally differently just at the push of a button. You can make your GSA feel the way you want wherever you want and there really isn't anything missing that you'd need to be able to control.

I generally cycle between ignition modes, ABS on and off, traction control settings and suspension feel on an average ride as I move from one situation to the next. It creates a more even ride-feel on a day that might see you riding dry, hard-pack dirt in the morning, sand in the afternoon and tar in the pouring rain in the evening. By adjusting the feel of the separate aids, the bike's braking, handling and acceleration feel much the same all day. Take a bike with no electronics on a similar ride and you'll be exhausted at the end of the day from concentrating and adapting to the quickly changing conditions.

The modes are all well thought through and if you take advantage of the GSA's own brain, it will reward you and make the ride better. I have noticed that a few riders don't spend the time to understand it all and end up, for example, riding in muddy, slippery conditions with traction control on full



When it comes to ticking boxes and owning a bike that's cutting-edge, the R 1200 GS Adventure is the pick

and wonder why the bike is chugging like a dying animal up hills. Take the time to learn how and where the modes work and experiment on top of that all you like.

If you own a GSA you've paid for some amazing capabilities — so go out and use them. I was once that sceptical guy and in fact I personally own an R 1150 GS because I do like that it isn't laden with tech. But after some time on a GSA I get back on old Gerty (yes, my bike has a name) and realise just how much I did use the different electronic aids and if I did have them I'd be making changes right then. I don't tell Gerty this, though — no need to make her feel insecure.

IT'S STILL WHEELS TO GROUND

Electronics don't make a bike good to ride. Never have and never will. They can't make a good vehicle great and proof of that is KITT from *Knight Rider* (if you're old enough to remember it). KITT was awesome — it could talk and drive itself and was basically a supercomputer on four wheels. But, ejector seat, a sense of smell and flame thrower aside, it was still a 1982 Pontiac Trans Am which, by today's standards, is a bit of a joke. Wow, I just made a reference to *Knight Rider* in a bike feature. I think its best we move on now.

The R1200GSA is a sweet bike to ride. It has all the positive hallmarks of a GS with a planted front-end, smooth power delivery and the ability to pick through tricky sections using the mountain of torque. The boxer engine dictates that it's a smart policy to not attempt to put your feet on the ground and "waddle" through a track, but on this bike it pays to stand up and drive on through. It's so well balanced that you're constantly blown away by what you can simply drive on over at low speeds while you're up on the pegs.

The Gear Shift Assist Pro (GSAP) gearbox is amazing. I found the no-clutch upshift under power was good, but my dirtbike brain found it a little hard to get used to just stomping on the lever for a downshift with no clutch. Once I got my head around the fact that it won't detonate the gearbox, the GSAP became one of my single favourite feature of the bike. The cruise control is brilliant as well and when you're facing half-day-long road or fire trail stretches that normally burn your wrist and forearm, it's a Godsend.

The modes dictate a great deal of the ride feel and I spend most of my time in the bush in Enduro Pro, which makes use of the bike's power and stability to slide out of or back into corners while

offering just the smallest amount of assistance to keep it all in check. The suspension is plush initially but you'll know when you push it too hard.

The bike can take all sorts of abuse, but hitting things like square-edged ledges or water holes at pace isn't the best policy. That's when you find damage to wheels happens and a reminder that, while it may feel like it can do anything, it is a bike of a serious weight so there are limits — and those limits are usually found when the boundaries between performance, comfort and versatility are pushed hard.

THE CHOICE AMONG MANY

The GSA is an example of BMW at its best; innovative, clever, practical and class-leading. The number of features that appear on a BMW one year and then a competition model some time later is long and as it stands, it's near impossible to compare a fully loaded R

1200 GS Adventure with anything else because there's nothing really like it.

The adventure bike market falls under a wide brief where a DR650 or KLR650 can be found alongside a Super Ténéré 1200. It feels like KTM is bringing out a new model every second week of the month and Honda is back in the game alongside old players like Triumph. You can take your pick of a 650, 660, 800, 1000, 1090 or 1200cc engine and then add all the big and small variants on top of that, and the choice isn't simple and clear-cut to the prospective buyer.

There are some great bikes in that line-up and an argument could be made for just about any one of them. But when it comes to ticking boxes and owning a bike that's cutting-edge, the R 1200 GS Adventure is the pick. This is tech pushed further than any competitor's model and based on a solid and proven ride package. It's the sort of bike that really makes you wonder what they'll be coming up with next.

FEATURE:

SUZUKI DR650

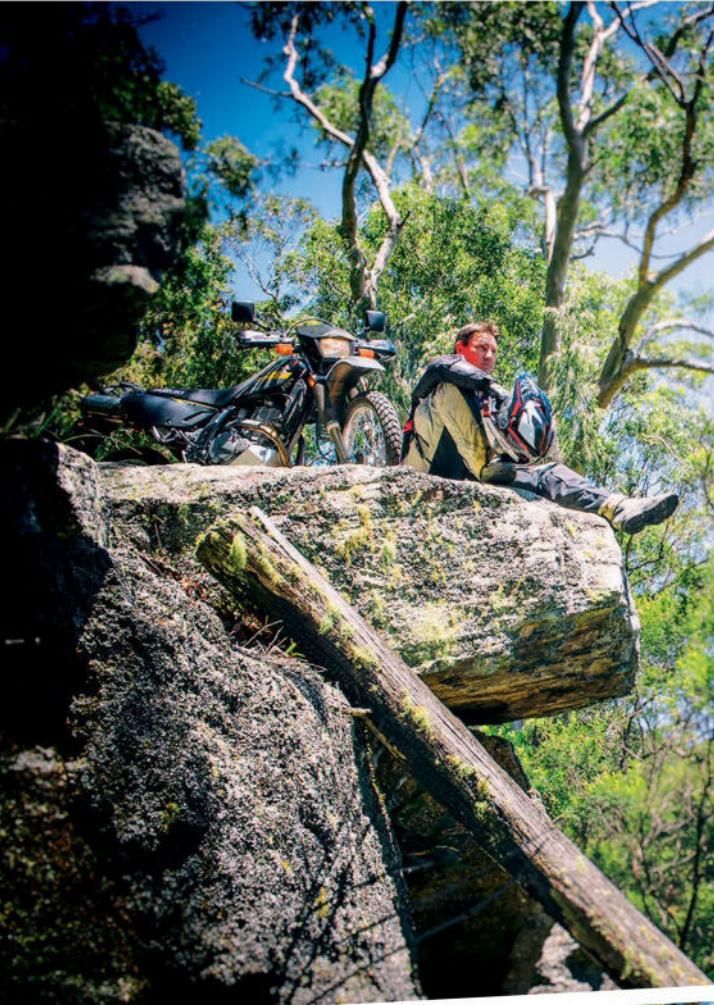




STORY BY DAMIEN ASHENHURST

TWO DECADES OF DIRT

Suzuki's DR has turned 26, with the current design pushing into its 20th year. Have the years dimmed the bike's appeal? Should we be looking for something new by now? Or does the DR live on forever?



There has been much written about the DR650 over the years. Not because it's flashy, because it's fast or because it carves ruts. It's not even all that attractive. It's got an understated exhaust note, a crappy seat and twig-sized footpegs. So why does this damn bike keep selling? For years it's been pushing the top of the pile in its category and there's no sign of it slowing down.

The DR650 first appeared in 1990, replacing the DR600 and taking on Honda's Dominator 650. The DR650 had the same engine as the 600 only bigger, but the rest of the bike was new and in fact came in two separate designs with the DR650 Dakar and DR650 RS. The Dakar isn't far removed from what we see today, but the RS ran a fairing and adventure-style front guard. Both bikes had 21-litre tanks and were well suited to long-distance exploration.

As early as 1991, a new model with electric start made its debut as the DR650RSE. Suzuki made changes again in 1992, with the 21-litre tank being swapped for a 17-litre unit — partly as a weight-loss program — and a new exhaust system bolstered low-end torque. The word Dakar was

dropped from the model name and the DR650R and RSE would take the model line through to 1996.

In 1996 the bike we know today really took shape with a huge weight loss through a new engine and chassis changes. Interestingly, the price of a new DR650SE then was \$7999 — pretty much the same as it is now.

And this is where development stops. In 1997 Suzuki did release the Freewind, which was based on the DR650. It was an ugly bike with a name that sounds like a remedy for flatulence — so we'll move on. The DR650 we know and love arrived in 1996 and aside from colour schemes, nothing has changed of note in the past 10 years. So after 26 years of service the DR650 is still kicking arse and selling well in Oz and NZ. But what's it really like to ride? We always talk about what you can do with a DR with the myriad aftermarket parts available, but in this feature we'll concentrate on what it's like to ride stock and for something different we'll include readers' DR650s and their recommendations for mods as well. Thanks to all the readers who posted their DRs on our Facebook page — there are some crackers!

THE REST OF THE 'ZUKE ADV FAMILY

The DR650 has a couple of cousins that deserve mention once the word adventure is brought up. The V-Strom range is maybe thought of by some still as a road bike-exclusive line-up but they are more than that. Having personally ridden the V-Strom 1000 ABS with some sweet Touratech gear on it from mountains to deserts, I can attest to its ability and legendary comfort level. I did a lot of kays on it loaded with gear and it never let me down. The limited ground clearance and suspension travel was the most limiting factor but overall it is a brilliant-value bike capable of exploring far and wide.

The V-Strom 650 XT is a more purpose-built adventure bike that, on the most basic level, has to be the most comfortable motorcycle I've ever ridden. It's a fair bit more refined than the DR and for those looking to mix commuting with adventure it's an excellent choice.

KEEPING IT SIMPLE

The DR's instrument cluster is sparse, much like you'd find on a scrambler. There's a speedo, it'll tell you how far you've gone, whether the blinker is on, if you're in neutral or high beam is on. There's no gear indicator, no temperature gauge, nothing about ABS or traction control and no LCD screen that replays *Game of Thrones*. It just has what you need and absolutely nothing more.

The seat height is low so those who aren't comfortable with the number of tall adventure bikes on the market will be happy. The seat is flat and wide and the juncture between it and the tank isn't uncomfortable. On longer rides the seat is too hard but for half-day rides it's no drama. That aside, the only glaring issue you might find with the ergos is the low bars. It's not easy to stand up on the DR with the stock bars fitted and while that's easy to fix, we're here this time to just look at the bike as it is.

The choke is on the left side of the bars and at the push of the button the bike starts and chugs along so quietly you could hear a mouse fart from metres away. There's a mild clunk to dropping into the fairly low first gear, which jumps in a pretty big way to second and third with something of a road bike feel. It's good practice to use the best-quality fuel you can get in the DR. I've found that running ethanol fuel (or low octane) isn't a great idea compared to premium fuels.

On the dirt the bike floats over trail trash. If you hit a drainage hump the rear will kick, but you can ride at a pretty good pace with some solid slides around corners.

Let me be honest: I ride all the latest and greatest bikes every year and I'm amazed at what we have on offer and the cool technical advancements that have been made. I then get on a DR650 and think, alright, let's get this over and done with so I can write another story about the old bike that never changes. But 20 minutes in and

every single time without fail I'm reminded how good it is to ride this bike. To just point it somewhere and know not much can stop it, and that even with the standard tank you can get a couple of hundred kilometres under your belt before you have to find some juice, is awesome.

The DR650 is the sum of its parts. It's not just the lack of refinements or shitty footpegs; I see it as two things. One is the reliable and versatile bike that rolls off the dealer's floor ready to take you afar, and the other is the promise of serious adventure at a financial cost that almost defies belief. The DR650 either is, or must be damn close to, the best-value motorcycle in Australia.

20 GOOD ONES

As I've said before, the Japanese know when to leave some things alone. We see whole bikes, engines and chassis lasting years and years and garnering more fans. The DR650 is an example of when the engineers know they're on a good thing. Happy birthday, DR650. We love ya heaps.



FEATURE:

SUZUKI DR650



JAMES CROSBIE
Panniers, luggage rack, Barkbusters, Polisport Freeflow front fender, LED driving lights, bar raisers, lowered pegs, padded seat cover, Staintune full exhaust system (carb jetted to suit) and a Funnelweb air filter



MARCO KÚTULAS
Lower pegs, bashplate, Barkbusters

READERS' DOZZERS!

We put the word out on Trailrider's Facebook page for readers to send in their DR650 pics and name three mods they reckon are the go to get the best from the bike.



MICHAEL ECKERT
RMZ450 forks
Revised ergos — proper bars and lowered pegs
Steering damper



IAN MILLER



MATTHEW SPENCER
More skill....



BARRY MORRIS
"BST magic" carb mod
Suspension makeover
GSXR exhaust pipe



ALASTAIR HYDE

STUART DICKS
1) Rid the bike of its very bulky exhaust system from head to toe and replaced with a STAINTUNE system. Absolutely brilliant and gave me an extra 6hp.
2) Upgraded the front fork springs/and rear shock spring for heavy-duty work. The rear spring is an EIBACH. Cost me about \$220 back in 2008.
3) 32-litre Safari tank



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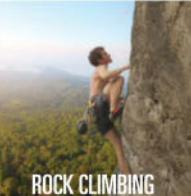
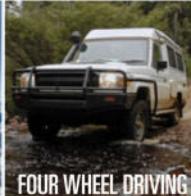
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STORY AND PHOTOS BY ANDREW CLUBB

NORTHERN EXPO- SURE

GOT A LONG WEEKEND AT YOUR DISPOSAL AND LOOKING FOR A LITTLE ADV ACTION IN NORTHERN NSW? FILL YOUR TANK AND PACK YOUR SADDLE BAGS AS WE PLOT OUT A THREE-DAY LAP OF ADVENTURE RIDING GOLD



TRAVEL STORY:

NORTHERN NSW ADV RIDE

What's the best road in Sydney when you ride an adventure bike? Any road leading out of Sydney, yeah?

You got that right!

The M1 north-bound out of the harbour city was the escape hatch this time, and the freeway drone for two hours in the early-morning light to meet the Professor at MotorcycleBiz HQ in Raymond Terrace was a small price to pay for another long weekend's adventure far from the maddening crowd of the big smoke.

The plan was to sniff out some ADV riding gold in the northern reaches of NSW across a three-day agenda, where the route would likely coincide with the availability of fuel, the availability of dirty bird, and the availability of a bunk for the night after a few cleansing XXXX Golds.

As always, the Professor was ready and waiting as my wing man Russ and I rumbled down his driveway. But for once there was no welcoming early-morning cuppa. Instead, the Professor barked: "Follow me, boys, we're heading for the museum and I'm not taking no for an answer. Let's go." He then promptly took off for his front gate as Russ and I mumbled, "What the?!", doing our best to spin our rigs around and keep the tech guru in sight.

DAY AT THE MUSEUM

For about an hour we chased the Professor across the back roads between Seaham and Bulahdelah before popping back onto the Pacific Highway and steaming north up national route number 1 to the Nabiac turn-off, where the Prof finally peeled off.

"Aha, I know where the Professor is going!" I muttered to myself when I saw the sign pointing to the National Motorcycle Museum. For years I had been whining about never going to the renowned bike museum, and for years the Professor had called me a fool for not ever paying it a visit. Now he had taken matters into his own hands and I had no option but to follow — and I am glad I did.

You wouldn't exactly say the Nabiac National Motorcycle Museum has any street presence, what with it being tucked away on a grassy block of land on the edge of the little hamlet of Nabiac and looking all the world like little more than some seriously large tin sheds. But that's from the outside — wait until you get inside!

Inside the place is absolutely bloody ginormous, laid out across three sections in a U-shape with classic road bikes down one side, dirt bikes down the other and mountains of motorcycle memorabilia in between. The place is huge and you could spend hours there taking it all in.

We parked up out front, clomped inside in our Klim gear and Alpinestars boots, paid the cheap-as-chips \$15 entry fee and then gazed at the

Rolling green hills and out-of-the-way back roads are what the northern NSW region is all about.



Mini pavlova and ice cream... why would you ever want to leave the bowl club at Inverell?



Schnitzel, gravy and chips. That's a gastronomic delight right there.



The plan was to sniff out some ADV riding gold in the northern reaches of NSW across a three-day agenda

myriad displays on offer. It is simply staggering the number of bikes (around 800!) the museum owners, Brian and Margaret Kelleher, have on display and our 90-minute stop was barely enough to take it all in.

The museum and its contents are impressive, no two ways about it, and I will be back again for a more detailed inspection. But we had bigger fish to fry this weekend, all of which involved wearing the knobs off some fresh 606s!

FUEL ME UP

After topping off the tanks at the highway servo at Nabiac following our dose of museum sightseeing, it was time to hit the dirt good and proper. We steered our steeds north-west in the direction of Gloucester, throwing a right about 15km before town to sneak due north through Bundook to hit the southern end of Nowendoc Road, which curiously enough leads up to Nowendoc.

This road is an ADV riding ripper, meandering through a seemingly endless lush green valley that parallels Thunderbolts Way. It's filled with eye-popping views, some juicy creek crossings, and sheep and cattle that have a habit of wandering about the road over blind crests — so beware!

At Nowendoc you can keep trekking due north up Brackendale Road, which keeps you off Thunderbolts and on the gravel, and will eventually deposit you at Walcha, where a late lunch of steak sambos and wedges at the Royal Cafe was very much on our agenda.

After another fuel top-up at



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TRAVEL STORY:

NORTHERN NSW ADV RIDE

Walcha, we went rock/paper/scissors over which way to go next — the Prof won and as a result a date with the Oxley Highway was next on our agenda.

Clearly looking to discover his inner Valentino, the Prof took off like a scalded cat eastward down the famed Oxley and into its hundreds (or is it thousands?) of prime radius tarmac turns. Russ and I followed in a far more gentlemanly fashion. We only saw the Prof again at the Gingers Creek roadhouse, where he'd had time to have a slash and refill with a double decaf latte thereafter.

Taking a leaf from the tortoise and the hare theory, Russ and I merely waved to the Prof and kept motoring along, but it wasn't long before the Professor rounded us up again, his 606s squealing for mercy as we wound down out of the mountains and hit civilisation again near Wauchope. There we turned north once more on the Pacific Highway and wound out the day with a hefty slab run-up to our first overnight stop at a low-bag motel just north of Macksville.

Yes, you do have to wear your thongs in the shower, but at least the rooms are cheap and the on-site Chinese restaurant does a mean feed of honey prawns and sizzling steak — but better yet, the XXXX Goldies are always icy cold.

THE WORM TURNS

The early bird catches the worm, I always say, and while Russ and I

have done a zillion trips away over the years, he still struggles with a pre-dawn start. But with the Professor and I champing at the bit, poor Russ had no option but to swap his body-hugging white Calvin Klein sleeping shorts for his Klim Dakar pants and get on the road with us just as the sun started poking its head over the nearby coastline.

After a quick zap up the highway, we peeled west and ran some back roads to Bellingen before then romping up Waterfall Way to Dorrigo and a brekky date at Juan's Cafe.

Juan's is a bike-themed cafe and the crew there always have some kick-ass freshly baked muffins on the menu, so after a quick pastry feast and lattes all round it was back on the bikes and into the bush.

This time I took the lead and plotted us a route due north to Lowanna, then straight through the sticks of the state forests along some high-quality fire trails and forest roads that eventually dumped us into Coutts Crossing, just south of Grafton. It was only late morning and not quite lunch time yet, but knowing we'd be off the beaten track for the next few hours I suggested to the boys we load up on a burger now. Besides, the crew at the take-away at the BP servo at Coutts Crossing do a seriously mean burger-with-the-lot. Perfect.

About an hour later, with our tanks and the bikes' tanks filled again, we headed south out of Coutts Crossing down Armidale Road toward

Nymboida, but just short of the little village we chucked a right onto Glen's Creek Road and started drooling at the next section of ADV riding gold that lay ahead of us.

OLD GRAFTON ROAD

Running about 140km from end to end, Old Grafton Road is a revered piece of adventure bike riding that at its eastern end kicks off near Nymboida and then winds along the Nymboida and Boyd Rivers before climbing up the mountains and deposits you in the heart of the New England Ranges near Grafton.

It's slippery, twisty, skatay gravel and offers remarkable views all the way, plus it even dishes up a hand-carved tunnel through a sheer rock face at one point. There are myriad picnic and camping spots along the way and you can choose to do it as quick or as casual as you like — but just watch for vehicles coming the other way around blind corners.

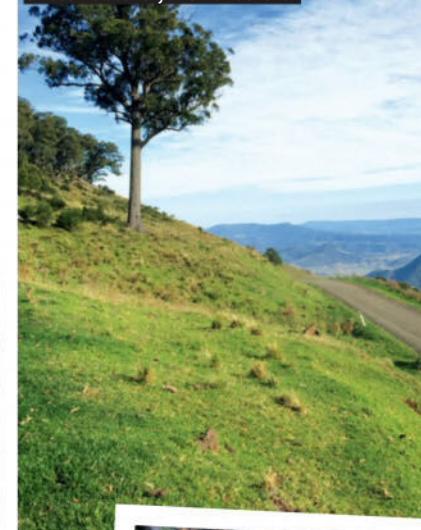
It's a gorgeous run and as the afternoon temperatures started to climb, we broke up the lengthy section with a stop at a causeway to dunk our heads and cool things down. A couple of post-dip jelly snakes and a swig from our Camelbacks and all was good with the world — yes indeed.

Eventually we emerged out of the northern end of Old Grafton Road and hit the Gwydir Highway, which we picked up for a few kays before turning north-west and romping cross-country to Dundee on the New England

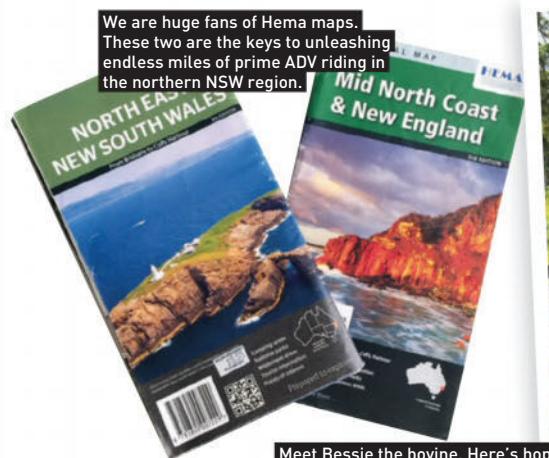
Crossing the Nymboida River to start the spectacular run north-west up Old Grafton Road. It's a special run this one.



Barrington Tops is another destination that never fails to deliver awesome scenery in all directions.



Russ and his Ténéré 250R slice through the convict tunnel on Old Grafton Road.



Meet Bessie the bovine. Here's hoping this is as close as she gets to the road when you're thumping through cattle country up near Inverell.



Inverell is in the heart of cattle country and the heifers were out in force



It is simply staggering the number of bikes (around 800!) the museum owners have on display



Highway, after which we kept on trekking west all the way to Emmaville and then on to Inverell and our next overnight stop at the Sapphire City Motel.

It was a very solid day but you couldn't wipe the smiles from our faces, least of all when the bowls is right across the road and any meal there can be capped off with a delicious mini pav and ice cream — too good.

THAT'S NO BULL

Inverell is in the heart of cattle country and the heifers were out in force as we made our getaway at dawn the next morning. We went west and then looped south around Copeton Dam, then hit the cattle stations good and proper. But with a stack of recent rain, the countryside was lush and green and the grass about a metre deep — just the right height to camouflage the cows until they lifted their heads and stepped out in front of you!

Tracking dead south we romped through the countryside all the way to Bendemeer and popped straight across the New England Highway to follow more dirt roads right the way into Walcha again, for another stop at the Royal Cafe.

Filling the bikes and filling our bellies, we settled in for another solid afternoon of riding, which this time took us south-west out of Walcha on pretty much a bee-line to Nundle. We watered things down with a quick lemon squash at the pub before pushing on further south over Crawney Pass and along Isaacs Creek Road and Pages Creek Road to Ellerston and south down to Moonan Flat.

Just before Moonan we threw a left and made the long and winding climb up Moonan Brook Road and Barrington Tops Forest Road to head across Barrington Tops, where this time around the weather was absolutely mint — compared to the last time I had been up there in the middle of summer and the Tops were buried in fog and the place felt like it was close to being covered in snow.

We dropped down the eastern side of the Tops and eventually rumbled into Gloucester, grabbed some fuel and a dog's eye from a servo, and then Russ and I glued ourselves onto the Prof's rear wheel as he set sail cross-country back to his home near Raymond Terrace.

We hit MotorcycleBiz HQ with about an hour of light remaining, so with that Russ and I bid a fast farewell to the Prof and headed for the M1 and the last fast blast back to the big smoke.

In three full days we had nailed down over 1700km on a route that included not only every type of ADV riding, but a motorcycle museum visit as well — and no less than two sly feeds of dirty bird along the way.

Truth be told, though, we barely scratched the surface of all the riding that's on offer in northern NSW — but that just means there's plenty more left for next time. Perfect.

Gorgeously restored 1969 Yamaha DT1 at the Nabiac Motorcycle Museum.



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BACKPACK

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WE TAKE A LOOK AT SOME
OF YOUR VERY OWN
RIDING MACHINES

TRIED AND TESTED

The gear and gadgets that get used and abused during our dirtbike duty

Safari Tanks' 15-litre fuel tank for WR-F, YZ-F and YZ-FX models

WORDS AND PICS BY CLUBBY

How much fuel capacity is enough? How long is a piece of string? Good questions. I've had a 2015-model Yamaha WR250F in my garage for almost a year now and with a slim 7.5-litre fuel cell that gives a range of between 90 and 120km or so — depending on mapping, exhaust, gearing, terrain and riding style — there are times on longer trail rides when you have to carefully plan your opportunities to refuel. Or carry more fuel with you, especially if you're riding with blokes on bikes with larger-capacity tanks.

When Aussie brand Safari Tanks revealed it had a long-range fuel tank in development for the new-generation WR250F with reverse cylinder head, I figured it would be the answer I was looking for when it came to enjoying a serious boost in fuel range for the new blue blade.

It took a while — hey, the Safari Tanks team like to get things right before taking a new product to market — but Safari's new tank is out now and not only does it fit the new WR250F, it also fits Yamaha's latest YZ250F and 450F MXers, as well as the new 2016 WR450F and YZ-FX 250 and 450 thumpers.

Biggest news of all, however, is the new Safari tank offers a whopping 15 litres capacity, which is double the capacity of the standard tank on my WR250F. If you want range, this is the tank that will deliver it.

The Safari tank is available in clear or grey finishes — I opted for the clear, which allows for easy fuel level checks — and is priced at \$649. It's available only from Yamaha dealers or Yamaha's Y-Shop online store (<http://yshop.yamaha-motor.com.au>).

The tank is supplied with a screw-on cap and vent hose, and comes with mounting hardware and instructions.

Installation of the tank is all pretty

straightforward, but first you need to give it a quick flush inside with some fuel to make sure any dags from manufacture are thoroughly cleaned out. Remove the standard tank and then remove from it the fuel pump and low-level fuel indicator sender, then swap these items over to the Safari tank, utilising the fuel pump mount ring and mount screws that Safari supplies. Make sure you use anti-seize compound on all screws that go into the brass capture nuts moulded into the Safari tank.

The Safari tank fits neatly into/atop the frame backbones of the WR-F, but in the process you do "lose" the stock air box top cover and the wings that extend above the radiators, as well as the little front piece of the two-piece stock seat arrangement. These items are replaced by the Safari tank itself.

Safari also supplies longer bolts and spacers for fastening the tank and radiator shrouds to each side of the main frame, but the fact the stock radiator shrouds are retained does wonders to maintain the WR-F's sleek standard lines and visual appeal. You will notice the rear sections of the shrouds sit a little wider (just) than the stock tank due to the shape and size of the Safari tank.

Ergonomically, the Safari tank goes close to mirroring the shape of the standard air box and wings, but of course the new tank and cap goes a little higher, with most of the increased fuel load now located in the area where the air box lid and wings used to sit.

And yes, the Safari setup does mean the tank has to be removed for air filter maintenance. And this is a fiddly job, with multiple fasteners for each radiator shroud, and the tank fasteners all having to be undone — with inserts and spacers that you will have to keep track of as you do it — before then

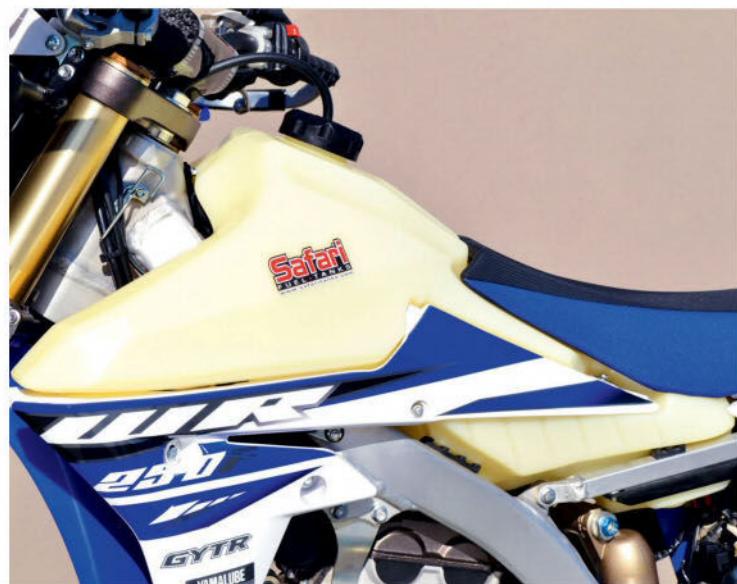
lifting and moving the tank enough to get to the filter element. In the workshop it's fine, but on the side of the trail it will be a time-consuming process as those inserts, spacers and collars will all want to drop in the dirt. No more popping off Dzus fasteners to access your air filter!

And be careful when washing the bike not to spray the hose at/near the steering head because the air filter element is more exposed; this is because the Safari tank doesn't seal around it like the stock air box cover did. But hey, what price fuel range? That's the big question because if you want to double your fuel range for longer trail rides, slower and more fiddly air filter access is the price you will have to pay — which might matter to some WR-F riders. However, riders of the YZ-F and YZ-FX models and serious racers will not be

too perturbed by this, as most times their air filter servicing will be done between events in the comfort of their own man cave. And if they can get less fuel stops in a cross-country or desert race, that's all that matters.

As for quality, fit and performance, the Safari tank scores high on all counts. Best of all, I am on my way to a 200km-plus fuel range, which is ideal for the type of trail riding I want do. With the fuel pump located at the very back/bottom/centre of the tank, you can utilise every last drop of Premium.

It's still early days for me with this particular tank on this particular bike, but I've used many a Safari tank before and have never had major issues. And when I did have any questions, the team at Safari Tanks, which is based in Victoria on the edge of the high country, were always readily available with advice and product support.



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Photo: Shan Moore

KENDA



WRITTEN BY CLIVE WARD (AKA THE PROFESSOR) OF MOTORCYCLEBIZ

I love modern technology. In days gone by, setting up the tuning of a motorcycle was a very tedious task. To change jetting you constantly had to remove the carb or at least loosen and twist it enough to get either the bowl cover off or the needle out the top. This resulted in fuel spilling all over your hands, and then you had to put it all back together and test it again. To change the ignition map you needed to buy and fit a Vortex CDI or similar, which then had 10 fixed maps you could switch between until you found the best one.

Today we have fabulous tuning tools and software; simply plug in and change fuelling or ignition mapping to your desired requirements. Once you have a great working map you can share it with your friends. Most of the tools require a laptop and the software and interface can also be quite expensive (\$1000 is quite common), but today we are going to look at the most user-friendly of them all — the Yamaha GYTR Power Tuner. This tool is available from any Yamaha dealer with a RRP cost of \$398 including GST.

Yamaha describe the tool as follows: "This easy plug-in fuel-injection and ignition-tuning tool allows riders to quickly adjust the fuel and ignition maps to suit riding conditions and rider preference. Allows for nine easy-to-program adjustment points for both the fuel and ignition maps. Monitor function allows the user to monitor the data from various sensors on the bike as well as adjust idle timing, see engine running time, and self-diagnosis function. Powered by two AA batteries, thus no laptop or time-consuming downloads necessary. Unit does not have to be plugged into bike to create maps. Compact design can fit in the palm of your hand, pocket etc. Memory function can save up to nine custom maps."

Did you notice in the blurb above it says it allows riders to tune? Yes, that's YOU! No need to have a degree in engineering and IT to operate or understand it, and you don't need to pay \$120 per hour for the local mechanic to come to your track or next race meeting and operate it. You also don't need to drag your mum's expensive laptop and

a generator to the track with you. In fact, on the recent WR450F launch, Thomo from Yamaha popped the device into his backpack and was whipping it out at every opportunity and changing maps in under a minute in the middle of the forest.

Yamaha also provides many different map suggestions on its website. You can download and print these, load them into the tuner and give them a try. If you don't like the response, then revert back or change it again in under a minute.

This is exactly what we tried with the long-term WR250F and I again enlisted the help of the Butterwick stig and his test track. I set the map to all zeros, so original base mapping, and sent him out. Every two laps he would come back in and I'd load another map and around he'd go again. Each time I wouldn't tell what changes I made — I'd just wait for feedback.

In all we tried six maps, finally settling on the "Cross Country" map. Now, this doesn't mean it's the perfect map for you; we were looking for a good torquey map with strong





low-mid-range power as our favourite riding is tight, single track and difficult or tricky terrain. We tested all these maps with both the standard muffler and the GYTR sports muffler; the GYTR does add some spice to them but it is not required to get more out of the bike.

Each digit + or - of fuel changes the original map by three per cent, so +3 would be a nine per cent increase in the opening time of the injector. Adjustment range is -7 to +7.

Each digit + or - of ignition changes the original map by one degree. Adjustment range is -7 to +4.

GYTR® POWER TUNER

2015-2016 WR250F SUGGESTED BASELINE SETTINGS

For closed-course use with GYTR Competition Kit/ECU, 2GB-E9500-V0-00
These settings are a general starting point; many factors will affect settings, including rider preference, accessory modification, track and atmospheric conditions.

GYTR or Aftermarket Exhaust								
Hard Hitting / Loamy condition			Ignition			RPM		
Fuel	4000	7000	10000	Throttle	3/4	3/8	1/8	+2 +2 +2
Throttle	3/4	-2	-1	0	3/4	+2	+2	+2
	3/8	-2	-2	0	3/8	+2	+3	+2
	1/8	-1	-2	-2	1/8	+1	+3	+2

Premium Pump Gas.

Smooth Linear / Slippery condition								
Fuel	4000	7000	10000	Ignition	4000	7000	10000	RPM
Throttle	3/4	+1	+2	0	3/4	-2	-1	-1
	3/8	+2	+3	+1	3/8	-2	-2	-1
	1/8	+1	+3	+2	1/8	-1	-2	-1

Premium Pump Gas.

Stock Exhaust								
Consistent power delivery at all RPM								
Fuel	4000	7000	10000	Ignition	4000	7000	10000	RPM
Throttle	3/4	-2	-2	-3	3/4	0	0	0
	3/8	+1	-1	-3	3/8	0	0	0
	1/8	-1	0	0	1/8	0	0	0

Premium Pump Gas.

GYTR® POWER TUNER

2014-2015 YZ250F SUGGESTED BASELINE SETTINGS

These settings are a general starting point; many factors will affect settings, including rider preference, accessory modification, track and atmospheric conditions.

GYTR Ported Head and GYTR by FMF Exhaust								
Fuel	4000	7000	10000	Ignition	4000	7000	10000	RPM
Throttle	3/4	-3	-1	0	3/4	0	+2	+3
	3/8	-2	-1	0	3/8	0	+2	+2
	1/8	0	0	0	1/8	0	0	0

VP® U4.4™ Fuel

GYTR or Stock Exhaust								
Mid RPM hit; quick revving, strong pulling at mid RPM								
Fuel	4000	7000	10000	Ignition	4000	7000	10000	RPM
Throttle	3/4	-2	0	0	3/4	+2	+1	0
	3/8	-3	-3	-1	3/8	+2	+2	0
	1/8	-2	-3	-2	1/8	+2	+2	0

Premium Pump Gas

Smooth acceleration; good for hard surface conditions								
Fuel	4000	7000	10000	Ignition	4000	7000	10000	RPM
Throttle	3/4	+1	+2	0	3/4	+2	+1	-1
	3/8	+2	+3	+1	3/8	+2	+2	-1
	1/8	+1	+3	+2	1/8	+1	+2	0

Premium Pump Gas

High RPM; good for soft conditions								
Fuel	4000	7000	10000	Ignition	4000	7000	10000	RPM
Throttle	3/4	0	+1	+2	3/4	0	0	0
	3/8	0	0	+1	3/8	0	0	0
	1/8	0	0	0	1/8	0	0	0

Premium Pump Gas

Fuel	RPM			Ignition			RPM	
	4000	7000	10,000				4000	7000
Throttle	3/4	+3	+3		3/4	+2	+2	+2
	3/8	+4	+4		3/8	+3	+3	+2
	1/8	+3	+3		1/8	+3	+3	+2

The tool does not allow changes to idle speed, idle fuel mixture or idle timing adjustment. The changes will only come into effect above 3000rpm and a throttle position of above two degrees.

As mentioned previously, the other manufacturers offer interface and software units which, once connected to your laptop, will provide at least the same level of tuning and, in most cases, even finer mapping adjustments. They do take some more time to learn and operate but you can be guaranteed all of them can make significant changes to how your bike rides.



ACTION TRAIL BIKE TOURS – URBENVILLE

Urbenville is a small town in the shire of Tenterfield, NSW, that's not too far from the Queensland border. The area has pretty much everything you want in a trailride with amazing trails, good hills and water crossings.

The people at Action Trail Bike Tours run guided rides through the

area and have been riding there long enough to know the land like the top of their front fenders. They cover anything from single to multi-day rides.

It can be a pretty sweet drive just getting to Urbenville; you go direct or run up the coast to Byron or Mullum

for some fun, and then duck inland to get dirty. There's so much good riding in that span you'll be salivating by the time you get to Urbenville.

You can check out more of what the guys are up to and have coming up on Facebook, or call 02 6634 1213 for bookings and dates.

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GRASS TRACK

Quite often as a trail rider you'll get the chance to ride a grass track or at least sections of one. Riding grass tracks or natural terrain tracks is great fun and allows you to approach things a little differently to a regular motocross track

STORY SHANE BOOTH PHOTOGRAPHY MATT BERNARD

LINE SELECTION

Picture the circuit as a big road race track: there are no jumps, minimal obstacles and keeping your momentum is very important, not only for racing but also to have the most fun on the track. You want to enter the turn from the outside and finish your braking before you start to turn. Once you're comfortable riding grass tracks you'll be able to push your braking later and later into the turn. Avoid turning in too early; you want to get to the inside of the turn at a point where you can roll the throttle on. A common mistake is reaching the apex too early. Once lines form, try to find the smoothest line that will set you up best for the next turn and allow you to keep the most momentum possible. If you're riding for the fun factor, keep your eye out for big loam berms that start

to push up on the outside of the turns. As the grass gets worn away, the dirt pushes to the outside of the turn and creates a nice, thick loam berm ready to be demolished. It's not the fastest way around but it's a damn lot of fun and makes for a sweet photo.

FLAT TURNING

As most turns on a grass track are flat turns, it's important to have your body position correct. You want to weight the outside of the bike when you're turning. The bike will still need to lean to turn but you are trying to keep your body on top of the bike, pushing weight into the outside foot peg and keeping your outside elbow up and bent. You want to be nice and smooth on the throttle, too; select a gear that will allow you to get through the turn without having to shift.

Work on being able to use one smooth roll on of the throttle — you should be able to avoid having to have two or three goes at applying the throttle. Every time you are on and off the gas there is a lot of weight being transferred around and the bike won't settle. Try to keep it nice and smooth and then the bike will turn much better and you'll find it easier to control and stay on the line you want.

MUST-HAVES

Grass tracks are often very hard on brakes. An oversized rotor and maybe a braided brake line will help. Most tracks are best suited to a soft to intermediate compound tyre and handguards are a must. A chest protector doesn't go astray either — if you've ever copped a rock from a 450 at top gear you'll know why.





BIG LOGS

Get comfortable riding over logs and your trail riding becomes just that bit better.

STORY SHANE BOOTH PHOTOGRAPHY MATT BERNARD

APPROACH

Get this right and everything has a chance of following correctly; get it wrong and you'll be on struggle street before you even start. You need to approach the log square on, and if the log is damp and slick then this is even more critical. If you have any sort of angle then there is a very good chance the rear wheel will just slide along. You should also take note of what traction you think is available before the log — this is important so you can judge the control use to get the front wheel up off the ground.

BODY POSITION

Attack a log like this in the standing position. Grip the bike tightly with your legs to help it stay straight and discourage the rear end of the bike from skipping sideways. Stay strong on the bike so you don't collapse or fold down on impact with the log.

COMMIT TO IT

As spectacular as this looks, it's actually the best way to deal with a log of this size. Lifting the front wheel as high as it is in this shot really helps — you can see that by the time the rear wheel hits the log and forces the front wheel to come down, the frame rails and engine cases have cleared the log. If your wheelie isn't quite high enough, your frame rails will hit the log and most likely cause the bike to come to a stop and throw your weight forward. For this run through, as the rear wheel has impacted the log I have added some throttle to keep the front from pitching forward; essentially, I'm jumping off the log here. You can also wheelie the log and pull the clutch in to let the front wheel drop, but this works better on smaller logs. If I did that here the frame would hit and I would have gone over the 'bars.'

PREPARE YOUR LINE

If you are unsure about a log and the only option is to continue, you can always pack some smaller branches or even rocks to build a bit of a ramp up and do the same on the backside of the log as well. If all else fails, get your mate to help you lift the bike over and then return the favour.

ROCK OVER IT

This is one way you can get over a log, especially if it's on the larger side and you are unsure about it. Approach the log slowly and pop the front wheel over it, allowing the frame rails to land on top of the log. At this point, pull the clutch in and let the bike balance there like it's on a centre stand. From that point you can rock the bike forward over the log and keep everything under control. If you feel like the bike may flip over forward from this point, you can also get off your bike and drag it off the log.





PROJECT BIKE

WR250F

The Professor has been busy with the WR250F, firstly testing many different engine maps (the full write-up is our Technical feature in this issue). During the process he also fitted a GYTR slip-on muffler. The new GYTR mufflers are made by FMF for Yamaha and are available at your local Yamaha dealer or via the Y-Shop. It's a nice-looking muffler, sounds great and added a few ponies to the output as well.

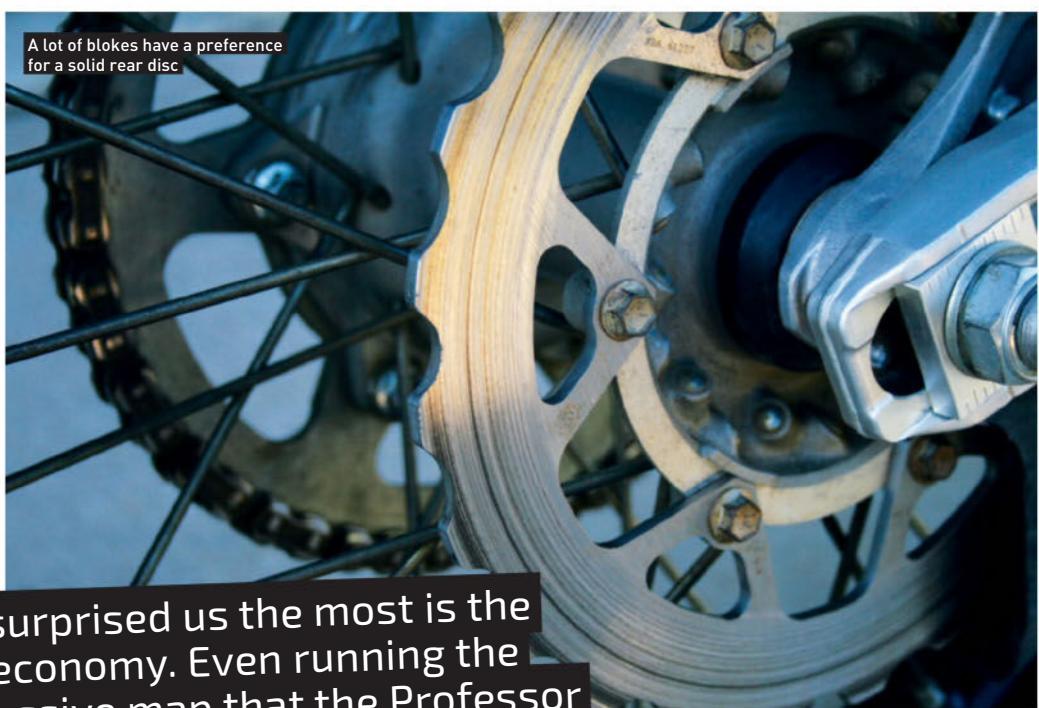
The bike was also due for new tyres and we opted for Bridgestone X30s. At the same time, Techno Mousse tubes were fitted to both ends. These new Mousse tubes offer

greater life than previous versions and we intend to test them out fully. The recent rains on the mid-north coast have left the Professor's favourite riding areas very wet. The Mousse provided a relative tyre pressure of around 8psi, which is great for traction in those conditions without any of the risk of getting a flat. He has also added a solid mud rear disc. The lack of holes in the solid disc prevents mud building up in there and forming a grinding paste that can destroy brake pads.

The bike has been cracking up the kays and has just clocked up 1000km. This called for a service and the Professor went over the bike top to bottom.



From the stocker look



What has surprised us the most is the great fuel economy. Even running the fairly aggressive map that the Professor installed, it achieved 17.53km/litre on a recent trail ride



To the hotter look



No flat zone right here. Mousse tubes are one of man's great inventions

The valve clearances were checked and all found to be in specification, and the suspension linkage was removed and grease added to keep those little bearings in top condition. Engine oil and filter were replaced. So far no issues or concerns have arisen and we are finding the bike very easy to live with.

What has surprised us the most is the great fuel economy. Even running the fairly aggressive map that the Professor installed, it achieved 17.53km/litre on a recent trail ride through the Bulahdelah forests. The bike travelled 94km with a good mix of trails; about 25km was open-road transport, about 40km was tight and technical single track and the rest was fast-flowing trails. The reserve fuel light came on at the 90km mark. On refuel the tank took 5.36 litres. Based on that figure, that equals a theoretical total range from the 7.5-litre tank of 131km.

READERS' RIDES

Anthony Thomas Toohey



Andrew Pardella



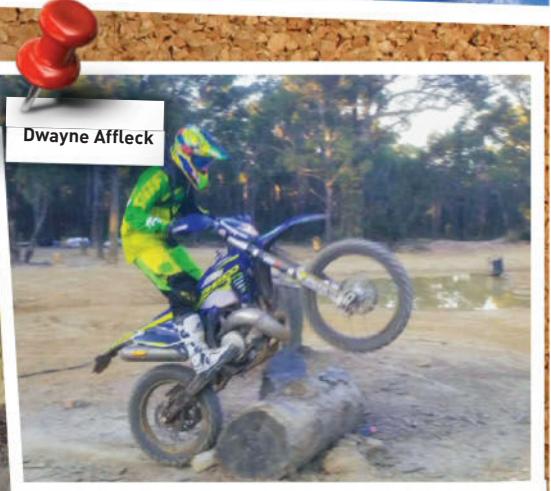
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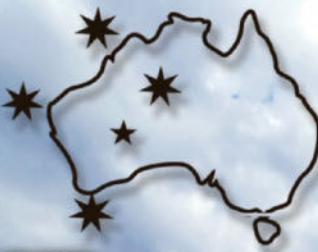
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